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Situation of human rights defenders

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the General Assembly the report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders, Mr. Michel Forst, in accordance with General Assembly resolutions 66/164 and 68/181 and Human Rights Council resolutions 16/5 and 25/18.

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Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders

Summary

The present report is the second submitted to the General Assembly by the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders. In this report, submitted in accordance with Human Rights Council resolutions 7/8 and 16/5, he provides an overview of his activities during the period under review. He presents the principal observations and findings derived from the seven regional consultations he organized with human rights defenders between October 2014 and June 2015. The Special Rapporteur then puts forward conclusions and recommendations.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report focuses on the regional consultations that the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders organized at the end of 2014 and in the first half of 2015 with a view to sharing with the Member States of the United Nations the principal observations and recommendations arising out of the discussions with the defenders, eliciting greater recognition of the role of defenders and affording them better protection against the attacks they face.

II. Activities

A. Communications

2. The Special Rapporteur has published communication and press releases on matters affecting certain defenders and on legislative reforms that could be seriously detrimental to the environment in which they operate.

3. These communications are an indispensable tool for carrying out the activities entrusted to him. They make it possible to raise urgent matters requiring the immediate attention of States and to draw attention to certain situations and certain phenomena. They can also help prevent violations of defenders' rights. The Special Rapporteur is convinced that communications constitute one of the man ways in which he can help protect defenders.

4. Between 1 December 2014 and 27 July 2015, the Special Rapporteur issued 137 communications, including 74 urgent appeals and 63 letters containing allegations, all filed jointly with other special procedures mandate holders, and he intends to study the possibility of undertaking joint actions with the regional human rights mechanisms.

5. Thirty-six communications (27%) were addressed to countries in the Asia-Pacific region; 29 (21%) to countries in Latin America and the Caribbean; 26 (19%) to countries in the Middle East and North Africa; 15 (18%) to African Countries; and 20 (15%) to countries in Europe, North America and Central Asia.

6. In those communications, the Special Rapporteur addressed the situation of more than 286 people, including 66 women.

7. He sent 11 communications regarding reprisals against groups of people or individuals because of their collaboration with the United Nations or international human rights organizations.

8. As of the date of this report, 45 answers had been received: a low response rate of 33%. Unfortunately, the replies received from governments were often vague or evasive. That finding is particularly worrying given the seriousness of the allegations and the pressing nature of certain situations. For that reason, the Special Rapporteur intends to increase follow-up to communications sent out, which all too often remain unanswered or meet with an inadequate response from certain governments. In the period covered by this report, the Special Rapporteur managed to follow up on more than one third of the communications sent out or matters addressed pursuant to his mandate.

9. The Special Rapporteur sent five communications concerning the elaboration of domestic laws that could be detrimental to the environment in which defenders go about their work. He intends to step up his communications to governments offering his advisory services to those that accept them.

10. The Special Rapporteur is aware of the serious issues related to the use of communications, principally in respect of the overwhelming number of cases raised and the lack of resources to duly process all the matters that merit being taken into account in connection with his mandate.

11. The Special Rapporteur has also attempted to use his influence to draw the attention of certain States and of the international community by publishing over 19 public statements on the situation of defenders in 12 countries. Those statements had to do with legal changes with negative implications for the situation of defenders; matters relating to certain defenders in particular, especially reprisals against persons attempting to collaborate with the United Nations and its human rights mechanisms and representatives; and certain at-risk groups of defenders working in a specific country.

B. Country visits

12. Since he took office on 2 June 2014, the Special Rapporteur has paid an official visit to Burundi (from 14 to 25 November, 2014).[1] He thanks the Burundian Government for having agreed to that visit and for the arrangements it made to facilitate it. In March 2016, a separate report will be issued as an addendum to the report he submitted to the Human Rights Council.

13. As of July 2015, the following countries had not responded to requests for a visit from the Special Rapporteur or his predecessors: Azerbaijan (2013 and 2015), Bahrain (2012 and 2015), Bangladesh (2013), Belarus (2002, 2003, 2004, 2010, 2011 and 2015), Bhutan (2001 and 2002), Cambodia (2012), Cameroon (2012 and 2014), Chad (2002, 2003 and 2004), China (2008, 2010 and 2015), Dominican Republic (2012), Egypt (2003, 2008, 2010 and 2012), Equatorial Guinea (2002), Ethiopia (2014), Fiji (2010 and 2012), Hungary (2015), Indonesia (2012), Jamaica (2012 and 2015), Kenya (2003 and 2004), Kuwait (2015), Kyrgyzstan (2012 and 2015), Malawi (2012), Malaysia (2002 and 2010), Maldives (2006 and 2015), Mexico (2011 and 2015), Mozambique (2003 and 2004), Namibia (2011), Nepal (2003, 2004, 2005, 2008, 2009 and 2012), Oman (2012), Pakistan (2003, 2007, 2008 and 2010), Peru (2015), Philippines (2008, 2010, 2012 and 2015), Russian Federation (2004, 2011 and 2015), Saudi Arabia (2012), Senegal (2012), Singapore (2002 and 2004), Sri Lanka (2008, 2010 and 2015), Syrian Arab Republic (2008 and 2010), Thailand (2012), Turkmenistan (2003 and 2004), United Arab Emirates (2012), Uzbekistan (2001, 2004 and 2007), Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) (2007, 2008, 2010 and 2015), Viet Nam (2012 and 2015) and Zimbabwe (2002, 2004, 2008, 2010 and 2011).

14. In 2015, the Special Rapporteur sent requests for country visits to the following countries: Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Belarus, China, Hungary, Jamaica, Kyrgyzstan, Kuwait, Maldives, Mexico, Peru, the Russian Federation, Sri Lanka,

[1] See http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=15341&LangID=E.

Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of), and Viet Nam. He wishes to thank the Governments of Azerbaijan, Hungary, Morocco, Peru, and the Philippines for having responded favourably to his requests and he hopes to reach an agreement with them on the dates for his visit.

C. Cooperation with international, regional and national partners

15. This section provides an overview of activities undertaken by the Special Rapporteur since his previous report to the Human Rights Council (that is to say, between 1 December 2014 and 30 July 2015).

16. During this period, the Special Rapporteur convened the fifth and sixth meetings of the mechanisms and programmes to protect defenders ("inter-mechanisms" process). The meetings were facilitated by the Observatory for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and held at the headquarters of the International Organization of La Francophonie.

17. On 21 and 22 January 2015, the Special Rapporteur took part in a consultation regarding a model national law to protect human rights defenders in Bogotá, organized by the International Service for Human Rights.

18. On 5 March, he attended the XVI Meeting of the Community of Democracies Governing Council in collaboration with the Human Rights Council in Geneva.

19. On 9 March, in the framework of activities organized in connection with International Women's Day, the Special Rapporteur took part in a parallel demonstration in Geneva on protection for female human rights defenders. That same week, parallel to the 28th session of the Human Rights Council, he took part in two civil society events on defenders in Asia and on the effect of promoting national security on the situation of human rights defenders.

20. On 18 March, the Special Rapporteur met in Brussels with members of the Human Rights Working Group of the European Council to examine with them a number of observations regarding implementation of the European Union's Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders. He also discussed with them the support the European Union could lend to the implementation of his and related mandates.

21. On 21 March, the Special Rapporteur took part in The Hague in the "Movies that Matter" festival organized by Amnesty International.

22. On 9 and 10 April, the Special Rapporteur took part in the "Defenders' Days" organized by Civil Rights Defenders in Stockholm, during which over 160 defenders from 35 countries attended the "civil rights defender of the year" award ceremony and took part in a capacity-building programme.

23. On 3 June, the Special Rapporteur took part in the European Development Days 2015 (EDD15) on matters relating to global development and international cooperation.

24. From 8 to 12 June, he took part in the annual meeting of Special Procedures Mandate Holders.

25. On 16 June, he participated in a debate on the situation of defenders in Azerbaijan and on reprisals and attacks against defenders, held parallel to the 29th session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva.

26. On 25 June, he accepted an invitation from the French embassy in Moscow and met with around 100 defenders in the Russian Federation.

27. He met with the permanent representatives of various missions in Geneva to discuss matters relating to the exercise of his mandate. Together with his team and other special procedures mandate holders, he discussed synergies and possible future cooperation.

III. Report on regional consultations

28. This section describes the principal observations and conclusions drawn from the consultations with the men and women defending human rights in different parts of the world, organized by the Special Rapporteur between October 2014 and June 2015. Given the wealth of information transmitted at these consultations, the Special Rapporteur will return to dwell in more detail on certain matters, such as good practices, the matter of reprisals, or certain categories of defenders, in upcoming reports to the United Nations Human Rights Council or the General Assembly.

29. The Special Rapporteur has also chosen not to name in the present report the countries mentioned by the defenders during the consultations in order to concentrate on global and regional trends and to avoid focusing one-sidedly on national situations. However, the powerful and at times overwhelming testimonies he heard from so many defenders will certain inspire his next reports and the choice of countries he wishes to visit.

A. Presentation of the project

1. Context and objectives of the consultations

30. Pursuant to Human Rights Council resolution 16/5, in which the Council asked him to examine trends, new facts and problems relating to the exercise of human rights, the Special Rapporteur has sought to engage, from the start of his mandate, in a series of regional consultations with human rights defenders.

These consultations pursued the following objectives:

- To meet face-to-face with the defenders in the regions concerned, especially those who will never be able to travel to Geneva;
- To gather testimony with a view to identifying trends, challenges, threats and opportunities for defenders and for all key actors in this field;
- To gauge the effectiveness of existing protection arrangements and mechanisms;
- To exchange information and share experiences relating to best practices and opportunities in this field and to visualize possible ways of overcoming the challenges encountered in the regions concerned.

2. Schedule and procedures followed

31. Seven regional consultations were held between October 2014 and June 2015. In 2014, they brought together defenders in North Africa and the Middle East in Tunis, in October; from Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia met in Tbilisi, in November; then from Eastern Asia and Pacific Asia met in Manila, in December. Four consultations followed in 2015: in January in Guatemala, for Latin America; in May, in Kampala, for English and Portuguese-speaking African countries, and in Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire) for French-speaking African countries, and finally, in June, in Florence (Italy) for defenders in Western Europe and elsewhere. Thanks to close cooperation between the Special Rapporteur, the regional offices and centres of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and international and regional organizations and networks specializing in the protection of defenders, it was possible to select the participants in these consultations with a variety of profiles and representative of a wide range of topics. By the end of these seven long consultations, more than 500 human rights defenders from 111 countries had met and had had the chance to exchange views with the Special Consultant. At the same time, the present report testifies to the difficulties faced by defenders all over the world and calls upon the international community to step up its efforts to protect defenders from the attacks and threats they face on a daily basis.

32. More than 280 women defending human rights took part in those discussions. At the request of organizations of female defenders, the Special Rapporteur organized a specific session at each consultation to enable them to engage in a separate dialogue with him to discuss issues that certain female defenders would not have liked or dared to bring up in front of their male colleagues. This testifies to the Special Rapporteur's desire to foster gender equality and to develop an approach in keeping with Human Rights Council 7/8, namely one that integrates a gender perspective throughout the work done pursuant to his mandate, paying particular attention to the situation of women human rights defenders.

33. In addition, with a view to involving all actors working in this field, the Special Rapporteur organized a public meeting with State representatives on 8 July, in Geneva, to enable them to make initial comments and observations on a preliminary version of the present report. He then organized a meeting of civil society and academic experts on 9 and 10 July, in Florence (Italy). The purpose of those two meetings was to continue exchanges of views regarding the situation of defenders and to garner proposals that might help boost the effectiveness of the Special rapporteur's mandate. This last consultation will enable him to pursue his quest for solutions that will be put forward in his next reports.

34. Finally, it is worth noting that while these consultations served to identify threats that all defenders face, they also highlighted issues specific to certain regions, due to the different, political, cultural, and social circumstances. For instance, it transpired from the consultations that defenders in North Africa and the Middle East were having to deal with the surge in Islamic extremism and extensive political turmoil. For their part, Latin American defenders underscored the rise in social unrest in countries that had been relatively stable since the fall of the military dictatorships in the 1980s. Defenders in that region also have to contend with the numerous challenges relating to respect for indigenous peoples and protection of their lands. For their part, defenders in Central Asia and Eastern Europe are caught

up in a post-Soviet environment prey to a number of territorial disputes and a harder line being taken vis-à-vis civil society. Defenders in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa face conflict or post-conflict situations, ethnic tensions and issues relating to the role of multinational enterprises. Finally, defenders in West European and other countries highlighted the fact that many of them were now engaged in problems relating to the situation of migrants, the consequences of economic crises and a rekindling of various forms of discrimination against minorities.

B. Global trends pointing to a threatening environment for defenders

35. For the Special Rapporteur, the evidence is oppressive. Everywhere in today's world, the situations defenders find themselves in give rise to multiple concerns. In very many countries, the situation is getting worse by the day. While the Special Rapporteur is happy about the emergence of a more prominent and better organized civil society, the fact is: there are still too many and, increasingly, multiple hurdles put in the way of those women and men who strive peacefully to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms.

36. The threats faced by defenders come in many guises (physical, psychological, economic, and social); reflect the interaction of multiple factors (poor governance or the absence of the rule of law, the surge in religious intolerance and fundamentalisms, and tensions over development issues); and are triggered by a variety of (political, economic, religious, State or private) actors. This finding is all the more striking when a growing number of defenders point to backtracking in countries in which the law seems designed to criminalize them and to thwart what they do.

37. It also transpires from the exchanges of views that the daily threats and barriers faced by defenders are not unrelated to the context of the "war against terrorism" being waged by all the countries. A number of counter-terrorism policies and strategies being pursued by States have posed and continue to pose a threat to defenders, since certain governments use counter-terrorism as a means to target defenders. Such policies entail restrictions on individual freedoms and actions by civil society under the pretext that this affords better protection of the general interest. Thus, numerous States have adopted opaque and complex sets of laws, certain provisions of which have been used to silence all forms of social and political protest and to engage in counter-terrorist activities that violate international human rights norms.

38. Finally exacerbating these difficulties is the fact that the attacks and threats against defenders are perpetrated not just by States, but by non-State actors as well. This applies particularly to countries in which one notes a surge in religious fundamentalism (especially in North America, Latin America, Africa and the Middle East) or the presence of armed or low intensity conflicts (in the Middle East, Africa and certain countries in Asia); or even to development projects in which certain economic actors attempt to impose their interests — sometimes with explicit support from governments — to the detriment of observance of human rights. The defenders point to numerous pressures from these different actors in respect of actions to promote economic, social and cultural rights (sexual and reproductive rights, labour rights, the rights of indigenous peoples, and the right to natural resources and the environment).

39. The Special Rapporteur was struck by the interconnectedness of the multiple threats encountered by defenders: a reminder of the need to address all those threats in a holistic and integrated manner.

40. Given these trends, certain factors afford sum up the vulnerability of so many defenders: ignorance of their role; attacks on individual defenders; the implementation of new intimidation and repressive measures, especially the use of laws to circumscribe and delegitimize the work of defenders; and, finally, the numerous institutional weaknesses of certain States.

1. Human rights defender: A little known, poorly understood and often denigrated occupation

41. Numerous defenders report an attitude of mistrust and even hostility toward them on the part of not just the authorities, but the media and the rest of society as well. This hostility stems partly from ignorance of the role played by defenders, but may also be due in part to the way their work is used by certain, social, economic and political actors. Defenders are not depicted as agents of change, making a direct or indirect contribution to the sustainable development and good governance of their countries. On the contrary, they are often described as foreign agents, touting values that run counter to those of their society or culture, or else as mainly politically motivated actors. Defenders have reported regular campaigns to discredit their work by relegating them to the status of political opponents bent on destroying the general interest, indeed as traitors. Sometimes the media depict them as being soft on terrorists or as a threat to the sovereignty of States.

42. These difficulties are exacerbated by ignorance among defenders themselves of the mechanisms they can resort to and levers they can pull to boost their visibility and strengthen protection, as well as by occasional communication failings between those various mechanisms.

2. Attacks targeting individual defenders and their next of kin

43. Being a human rights defender involves personally exposing oneself to multiple dangers, including risking one's life or liberty. With the exception of defenders from a few countries, that is the conclusion reached by numerous defenders when they describe the threats and challenges they face. The defenders first testified straightforwardly, but with considerable feeling, regarding the frequent attacks they are subjected to physical, be it in the form of attempted murder, abduction or even acts of sexual violence, which sometimes force them to go into exile, leaving their next of kin behind and devoid of protection. The Special Reporter was struck by the number or instances cited by the defenders, in which they were remanded in custody for no reason, or suffered torture, clandestine arrests or trials by military tribunals. Often enough, when defenders attempt to alert the media to their situation, seek justice and obtain reparation, they encounter a fair amount of indifference. Generally speaking, attacks on them are not investigated and the perpetrators lose no sleep, all of which clearly encourages a culture of impunity. In addition, defenders face obstacles to their freedom of movement both within their countries and, for example, when they seek authorization to leave them to take part in international meetings. Another very worrisome fact is that those attacks do only directly target the defenders; they are also often accompanied by threats and attack on their family members, increasing the pressure they are under.

44. Some defenders also mentioned the numerous reprisals against them since they began cooperation with the United Nations or with international and regional organizations for the promotion and defence of human rights. Such reprisals may take different forms, varying from harassment or defamation campaigns to physical assault, but they all have in common is intent to intimidate and silence defenders.

3. New forms of repression to restrict the work done by defenders

45. The Special Rapporteur was struck by the sophistication of the new techniques and forms of repression, especially via the media, mentioned by the defenders interviewed. According to accounts from defenders in several dozen countries, defamation campaigns in the written press or on the radio are routinely conducted by governments or radical groups in numerous countries with a view to stigmatizing defenders.

46. In addition, digital communications are also now being used to hamper the work of defenders. The Internet and, more broadly, new technology, which until recently provided a formidable tool for voicing opinions, accessing information, and forging networks of individuals and organizations, are today being used by States to monitor and curb the work of defenders. That is particularly worrying, given that numerous defenders use the Internet on a daily basis to promote and protect human rights, thereby exposing themselves to multiple threats. Defenders in Africa, Latin America, the Middle East and Asia have reported instances of harassment and defamation campaigns against social networks and blogs. E-mails are also intercepted and telephone calls recorded. Several female defenders have described how pirated pornographic images purporting to depict them have been disseminated on certain social media, in a serious attack on their dignity.

47. Defenders also underscored the growing use of laws to punish and discredit their work. A recurrent concern emerging during the consultations was the use of the law by certain States today to restrict or even criminalize the activities of defenders: a development already highlighted by the previous Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders in 2012.

48. The defenders confirmed these trends at the various consultations and the Special Rapporteur is especially perturbed at seeing governments copying the methods of the most repressive governments in this respect. In certain countries, there has been a resurgence of the misuse of laws to improperly restrict actions by defenders, particularly journalists, bloggers and lawyers. Some defenders also pointed to frequent hurdles designed to hamper the operations of the organizations they work for, including obstacles to their obtaining financing (especially from abroad) or to their registration or the renewal of their accreditation, or permission to organize some peaceful demonstrations.

49. Finally, defenders cited numerous cases of judicial harassment, arrests, arbitrary detentions and convictions accompanied by often disproportionately harsh penalties. Certain States attempt to silence defenders by handing down long prison sentences after fake trials on charges of tax evasion or illegal possession of weapons or drugs.

4. Profound institutional weaknesses

50. The defenders repeatedly stressed that the various threats and attacks they endure were made possible by an institutional context in which the basic tenets of the rule of law and democratic principles were either not — or less and less — respected. Time and again the defenders highlighted the impunity and corruption prevailing in numerous countries characterized by the absence of an independent judiciary.

51. Furthermore, the defenders mentioned failure to train and sensitize certain State representatives, be they officials (policemen, prison wardens) or members of the judiciary, with respect to human rights issues in general and human rights defenders in particular. That lack of training and awareness-raising could partly explain the persistence of human rights violations by certain law enforcement officers, particularly during demonstrations, where excessive force is deployed.

52. The consultations also revealed the sense that national human rights laws were enacted and implemented without prior consultation with civil society or even the National Human Rights Institution of the country, if such an institution existed.

53. The defenders also point to a lack of "intersectionality", that is to say, the awareness that different types and sources of discrimination intersect with, and reinforce, one another. Few studies address the problems faced by defenders when they are the target of several forms of discrimination (take, for instance, the case of a female defender who has the status of a woman living in exile or that of a homosexual defender of ethnic minority origin). The international human rights system has not yet systematically incorporated an intersectional approach and, as a result, different sources of discrimination tend to be treated compartmentally. Thus, solutions do not permit a comprehensive grasp of the whole set of discriminations and vulnerabilities to which such defenders are exposed. Taking these different parameters into account would doubtless ensure a more integrated and crosscutting approach in the solutions to be found for these categories of defenders. This is one of the topics the Special Rapporteur intends to revisit in his next reports.

54. The role of national human rights institutions also cropped up several times during the consultations. However, the defenders often pointed to difficulties they had experienced in dealing with these institutions. In some cases, fraught relations between these two types of actor may be due to the latter's failure to abide by the Paris Principles, their ineffectiveness, timidity, or ignorance of the situation of the defenders. Finally, according to the defenders, major budget cuts or political attacks have also affected several of these institutions in a number of countries in recent months, whereby it is worth recalling that national human rights institutions are sometimes themselves defenders and, as such, threatened by the government of their country. The Special Rapporteur issued several communications along those lines during the period under review.

55. Finally, the defenders stressed the recurrent failure to implement the recommendations of the United Nations mechanisms or regional organizations and voiced their regret that so few countries have put inter-ministerial monitoring mechanisms in place.

C. Threats faced by the most at-risk groups of defenders

1. Common threats faced by these groups of defenders

56. During each regional consultation, discussions were held about the threats and challenges faced by certain specific groups of defenders. As requested on several occasions by the Human Rights Council (in its resolutions 13/3, 22/6 and 24/24), strategies and actions for providing them with better protection were also examined. Some defenders face threats purely because of their identity (for example, women, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex persons, members of indigenous peoples, or defenders of persons suffering from albinism), others because of the issues they address (combating corruption, protecting the environment), or due to a particularly sensitive context (defenders working in conflict or post-conflict areas).

57. The groups of defenders singled out in this report are naturally not the only groups at risk. Others have been identified, but the Special Rapporteur has chosen to highlight those mentioned in the majority of the consultations. Broadly speaking, several findings stand out and concern all these groups.

58. To start with, one can discern an increase in the lack of legal protection for the most at-risk groups, the absence of specific legislation regarding them and sometimes even the effects of discriminatory laws. The defenders pointed out the high level of impunity for perpetrators of the attacks carried out, which is an insidious way of legitimizing acts of violence against them.

59. The defenders also describe their sense that they are often on their own, with the media showing little interest in reporting acts of aggression against them and with little support from political figures or even the community of defenders. Here, it should be stressed that these groups of defenders often question the power structures or systems embedded in the societies they work in, and do therefore run the risk of being stigmatized or depicted as persons opposing traditions, the established order or the national interest.

60. The exchanges of views with defenders threw light on the structural, system causes of the violations committed against these groups, be they the persistence of male-female stereotypes, social and economic inequalities, or the culture of impunity and corruption pervading certain countries. Protecting these groups will therefore only be effective if a holistic and crosscutting approach is taken to their situation.

2. Female human rights defenders

61. At each of the consultations, female defenders reminded participants that being a female human rights defender meant being exposed to threats both because of their status as women and because they strove to defend and promote human rights. While they are attacked just like other defenders, those acts of violence are often gender-based. The threat or use of sexual violence is commonplace in numerous countries. Female defenders very often work in countries in which the dominant discourse still confines women to the private sphere and it is often in that regard that they come under attack. They are the object of particularly virulent harassment, defamation and stigmatization campaigns on the Internet, in which their respectability and credibility as a female defender, women, mother, or citizen are derided.

62. Female defenders explained that those violations could not be understood without an in-depth analysis of the social, cultural, economic or political context, in which a patriarchal culture persists along with deeply-rooted stereotypes. They said they were the victims of attacks because they questioned that culture and challenged traditionally assigned roles. During the consultations numerous defenders described the insults hurled at female defenders, who are often depicted as prostitutes, or as immoral, sinful individuals undermining respect for traditional values. According to the female defenders, that makes them the preferred targets of religious groups, especially when they strive for the observance and promotion of sexual and reproductive rights.

63. In addition, female defenders complained of gaps in the responses of the various mechanisms and organizations that do not take men-women issues sufficiently into account (for instance, in resettlement programmes, from which families are often excluded). Female defenders likewise mentioned the need for them to be included from the outset in the preparation of programmes to protect them, in order to get away from a sometime paternalistic approach that plays down the challenges they face.

64. Finally, female defenders complained about women being depicted first as victims, and not as fully fledged actors bringing about change. The role of female defenders is still little known or recognized. They come up against numerous hurdles in their own family, their community and the organizations they work in. Female defenders described national contexts in which they were still perceived as second class players, whose expertise applied only to certain areas and whose contribution to the observance and promotion of human rights remained for the most part invisible. They complained that they were not fully brought into consultation processes, particularly as regards development projects. It should also be pointed out that, in their separate sessions with the Special Rapporteur, female defenders described the situation within non-governmental organizations, where stereotypes favouring men persist. They reported difficulties in being recognized by their male colleagues, in management or decision-making positions. Several women personally invited by the Special Rapporteur to take part in the regional consultations had found themselves replaced by a male colleague.

3. Defenders of the rights of lesbian, homosexual, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons

65. Defenders promoting the rights of lesbian, homosexual, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons are also the target of numerous attacks. They told of hate crimes encouraged by a national environment that stigmatized them, with the State itself acting as the vehicle for this form of discrimination by criminalizing homosexuality, as is the case in some African and Middle Eastern countries. In several countries, homosexuality is punishable by the death penalty, which makes the defenders' work extremely dangerous. These defenders are likewise the subject of numerous attempts at homophobic blackmail, extortion, or defamatory campaigns, especially on the Internet and in social media. In addition, they have to contend with the pressure exerted by certain religious groups which depict these defenders as a threat to traditional values and as people who promote immoral and decadent Western values.

66. The lack of any protection under the law or in practice exacerbates the vulnerability of defenders of the rights of lesbian, homosexual, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons. Neither the security forces nor judges are trained in regard to respect for the rights of these persons, which leads to major deficiencies in the registering of complaints, prosecuting those responsible for human rights violations and bring them to justice. The defenders also mentioned the lack of resources to enable them to seek legal assistance in cases of discrimination and aggression against them.

67. Finally, the defenders dwelled at length on the lack of public acknowledgment (*visibilité*) of lesbian, transgender and intersex persons and the lack of political and social support, even sometimes in among the defender community. That is manifested, for instance, in the lack of support from other defenders, nongovernmental organizations, or national human rights institutions that do not express solidarity for fear of reprisals or out of shame of being associated with issues relating to lesbian, homosexual, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons.

4. Defenders of rights relating to land, defence of the environment and corporate responsibility

68. One category of defenders regularly participating in regional consultations is the group promoting and defending rights relating to land, the environment and corporate responsibility. These defenders endure various kinds of surveillance, attacks, forced disappearances or campaigns to discredit them as opponents of progress and the development of their countries. They spoke of the excessive use of force against demonstrators and activists working on corporate responsibility matters or labour rights. They are the targets of actions taken by both State and non-State actors (enterprises, private groups guarding sites, individuals linked to organized crime, and so on). In this connection, they mention systematic collusion among these different kinds of actors designed to block reports by the defenders that throw light on acts of corruption and human rights violations. The various kinds of violations and threats are encouraged by a weak institutional environment, in which States have failed to put in place any effective mechanism for penalizing human rights violations committed by enterprises. Defenders also complain of the lack of transparency and accountability of enterprises, especially in extractive industries.

5. Defenders combating corruption and impunity

69. Defenders working on governance issues, promoting transparency and accountability on the part of States, and combating corruption are among the most at-risk groups of defenders, subject to relentless harassment and multiple types of threats and attacks.

70. Their work is often hampered by the lack of legal provisions for access to information or failure to implement such laws. These defenders reported governments' reluctance to protect them, due to the numerous political and economic interests at stake. Finally, defenders working on matters that involve combating impunity are often the targets of attacks or campaigns to intimidate them, and witnesses often receive threats designed to deter them from appearing in court during certain trials.

6. Defenders seeking to protect the rights of minorities and refugees

71. Throughout the world, these defenders endure a series of threats and violations of their rights, sometimes relayed by the media in a context marked by an abundance of ultranationalist rhetoric stigmatizing certain communities or minority groups. These defenders are also labelled as traitors when they support certain groups or communities, such as the Roma people or indigenous peoples.

72. The defenders also complain that minorities are not consulted or else pseudo-consultations are held with people chosen by the State, not by the communities themselves.

73. Finally, as regards indigenous peoples, numerous defenders in Latin America underscored the lack of a legal and institutional framework recognizing the rights of these communities or, when they are recognized, the failure to implement them. The fact that they live in isolated rural areas combined with the existence of certain kinds of claims, such as the defence of lands or attempts to achieve autonomy, expose them to numerous threats and physical assault. This is one of the areas in which the Special Rapporteur intends to conduct a specific study together with the Special Rapporteur for the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

7. Journalists and bloggers

74. The regional consultations afforded an opportunity to revisit the issue of increased attacks on journalists working on human rights cases. Such journalists are coming up against growing obstacles as soon as they attempt to report on cases of human rights violations. Some defenders stress, in particular, legal lacunae regarding freedom of information and the right to access information. Journalists investigating accountability and combating corruption have been threatened with the suspension or non-renewal of their accreditation as journalists or have been put under pressure to reveal the identity of their sources. They also complain of the perverse effects of enforcing laws against defamation or blasphemy or for protecting national security which lead to censorship or even self-censorship by numerous journalists investigating human rights violations. Finally, journalist defenders have found it increasingly difficult to move around freely, obtain visas, or work in areas of armed conflicts, where they are targeted by the various parties to the conflict.

8. Lawyers working to promote and protect human rights

75. Lawyers are attacked and threatened both in their capacity as defenders and for the part they play in defending defenders. Their offices are ransacked, their communications are intercepted by the authorities or third parties, and they are sometimes victims of intimidation campaigns that may even include the withdrawal of their license to operate. These lawyers, and in some cases their families, also pointed out that they were regularly the object of attacks, harassment campaigns, arbitrary detention, or acts of torture. Lawyers working for defenders have been slandered and accused of treason or of having ties to terrorism. Their work is continually obstructed and there, too, defenders have to contend with the lack of an independent judiciary.

9. Defenders working in countries at war or in areas exposed to internal conflict

76. The Special Rapporteur was disturbed at the large number of difficulties encountered by this group of defenders, who have to contend with situations in which their physical and psychological wellbeing are threatened. Defenders working in conflict zones and reporting human rights violations face attacks not only from the State, but also from armed groups, militias or terrorist groups, and are regarded as potential enemies by all the parties to the conflict. In that connection, the defenders recalled that the emergence of terrorist groups makes the work of defending human rights especially difficult in certain regions. They also pointed to material difficulties and restrictions on getting into conflict zones, and also to some defenders' lack of experience particularly when documenting cases of human rights violations and keeping their data secure. Finally, the defenders mentioned the exacerbation of nationalist rhetoric and increasing polarisation in public opinion, which tended to isolate defenders, accusing them of not siding with one party or another.

77. Given the nature of the attacks and threats to which they are subjected and the type of environment in which they operate, the Special Rapporteur intends to organize a specific consultation with defenders living and working in conflict or post-conflict areas in coordination with certain specialized international organizations.

D. Mixed experiences with cooperation with regional mechanisms and other international and regional actors

78. One of the objectives of the consultations was to ask participating defenders about their experience of cooperating with protection mechanisms, be they international (like the special procedures of the Human Rights Council and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights) or regional (such as those developed by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, the African Commission on Human and People's Rights, the Council of Europe, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, or the European Union).

79. The mixed nature of participants' experiences of cooperation underscored the need for more robust political commitment on the part of actors and for strengthening existing mechanisms, and all that, moreover, in a context in which national mechanisms are still deficient, or even non-existent. The defenders also insisted on the importance of training and capacity building to make better use of the various mechanisms and instruments. The Special Rapporteur was struck by the disparity of experiences of cooperation with those mechanisms, be they disparities between regions (with some being familiar, or even very familiar, with the mechanisms: Latin America, Western Europe, West Africa, while others — Horn of Africa, Southern Africa, Asia, Middle East — are not) or between the different mechanisms.

80. Most defenders stressed the lack of visibility and accessibility of the Special Rapporteur; only a minority had been contact with the mandate holder. The defenders insisted on the need to strengthen their ties with the Special Rapporteur, especially on the ground. In that connection, they expressed their appreciation of the fact that they had been consulted by the Special Rapporteur during the regional meetings he had attended in order to enable defenders unable to travel to meet him.

A very large number of defenders expressed their wish to see the Special Rapporteur visit their country, either on official mission or in response to invitations extended by universities, regional networks or embassies. The defenders also brought up the lack of publicity and dissemination of the Declaration of 1998 on human rights defenders (General Assembly resolution 53/144, annex), the failure to translate the Declaration into all languages so as to make it available to all, and the limits imposed on certain working methods of the mandate holder. By way of example, many defenders mentioned the abstruse nature of certain procedures, especially the communications system, which mattered because its purpose is to enable individual cases of human rights violations against defenders to be submitted to the States concerned.

81. As regards those communications, the defenders made it abundantly clear that in their experience the mechanism seemed opaque and ineffective and needed to be reviewed in depth with a view to make it more functional. Several difficulties were identified during the consultations, especially by the group of experts: the insufficient number of communications sent by the Special Rapporteur; the lack of a system of notifications and alerts to inform organizations and individuals that have filed a complaint of subsequent developments, due to the principle of confidentiality written into the code of conduct of special procedures mandate holders; and, finally, the lack of follow-up to communications once they have been published. Those difficulties were felt to be factors that may discourage defenders from asking the Special Rapporteur to intervene.

82. Joint communications, that is to say, those sent by several Special Rapporteurs, were mentioned frequently, without, however, any consensus appearing to emerge between the defenders and the experts. Some stress that such communications add to visibility and impact, while others are not completely convinced of their effectiveness and feel that the repetitive nature of those communications could in the long run prove counterproductive. The defenders and experts proposed various solutions to mitigate the difficulties, such as developing a follow-up plan to keep better track of how certain situations evolve. They also proposed that the annual report on communications, which is public, be widely distributed to embassies, nongovernmental organizations and other stakeholders so as to replicate the information and increase impact during exchanges with States. The issue of communications will be the subject of a specific study that the Special Rapporteur intends to conduct together with other special procedures mandate holders.

83. With respect to country visits, the defenders reaffirmed the importance of meeting actors in situ, while emphasizing that too few official visits were possible each year, due to lack of resources or to the refusal by State to invite the Special Rapporteur. Nevertheless, they pointed out that such visits could also be detrimental for defenders in the country concerned. For example, some defenders complained of "preventive" detentions carried out in countries visited by a Special Rapporteur. Finally, they recalled the need for better up front preparations for such missions and for a follow-up mechanism to ensure that any recommendations issued as a result of those visits are effectively implemented.

84. Finally, the defenders asked for tighter security surrounding their (especially electronic) exchanges with the Special Rapporteur and expressed their desire to see new issues addressed. For example, they voiced their concerns regarding the

increasing number of human rights violations being perpetrated by non-State actors, particularly certain religious fundamentalist groups or corporations.

85. The defenders also encouraged the Special Rapporteur to strengthen his collaboration with country and regional offices of the United Nations during preparations for country visits and in monitoring the situation of an at-risk defender.

86. Even though this report did not primarily intend to evaluate regional mechanisms, they were discussed on several occasions during the consultations. Here, it is worth noting that, with the exception of Asia and the Middle East, there are regional mechanisms in all parts of the world. Nevertheless, in this respect, too, the defenders reported very different experiences. Like the United Nations mandate on the situation of human rights defenders, regional mechanisms are still unfamiliar to defenders — especially those who live in remote areas, without access to the latest information technology. The defenders also point to the inability of certain mechanisms to respond to urgent individual cases and they complain about the complexity of — in their opinion — increasingly restrictive procedures.

87. While the European Union's Guidelines on Defenders were specifically addressed during the consultations, it must be said that only one third of the defenders said they were familiar with them. And those that were familiar with them perceived a lack of training and information among the representatives of the member states of the European Union. They also alluded to a lack of clarity of the selection criteria used by the European Union to support defenders in certain countries, and to the lack of familiarity with European Union procedures on the part of certain embassies, along with the reluctance of some ambassadors to make use of the means at their disposal for protecting defenders, for fear of offending the Government of the country to which they have been posted.

88. The issues mentioned are all the more important given the defender's emphasis on the timeliness and importance of such Guidelines and their insistence on the need for coordination with embassies, representatives of the European Union and its member states on the ground.

89. It would be impossible to conclude the present section without harking back to the disturbing increase in the number of reprisals and acts of intimidation reported by defenders during the regional consultations. Fear of reprisals perpetrated by non-State or governmental actors deters some defenders from cooperating with the United Nations and regional mechanisms. In this connection, the defenders point to the surveillance exercised over them and over certain non-governmental organizations that cooperate with the United Nations on issues deemed to be sensitive, such as discrimination against Roma people, or the promotion of sexual and reproductive rights, sexual orientation and identity. The defenders urged the Special Rapporteur to continue to support their reports calling for an end to these reprisals and attempts to intimidate them. In this regard, the defenders mentioned some States' attitude to such reprisals. While they are guilty of, or complicit in acquiescing to, attacks on them that all too often go unpunished, States nevertheless have a fundamental role to play, according to the defenders.

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

A. Conclusions

90. **The few observations presented in the present report show that we are dealing with attacks designed to weaken the women and men who are combating injustice and putting themselves in harm's way in order to defend the rights of those who cannot defend themselves. When these defenders are attacked, it is not just them but human rights that are threatened. The defenders we met at these seven consultations run countless risks that leave them distraught and often on their own. The Special Rapporteur is extremely worried about the trends alluded to in this report, especially with regard to the most exposed groups of defenders. He intends to continue exchanging views on certain points that emerged during these consultations in order to exhaust every possible opportunity to provide them with better protection. Positive developments were, nevertheless, reported in the course of these consultations, be it the enactment of domestic laws to protect defenders, certain projects such as the "shelter cities" or the preparation of defenders' kits. The Special Rapporteur will address such initiatives and sound practices in upcoming reports.**

91. **Nevertheless, in very many countries, defending and promoting human rights remain an extraordinarily dangerous activity. Nevertheless, that activity is a universally recognized right that all actors are duty-bound to protect as a routine fact of life. The consultations showed the importance of a human rights education for ensuring that society as a whole recognizes the role and contribution of actions undertaken by teachers, lawyers, journalists, employees of nongovernmental organizations, and ordinary citizens. We need not just to recall the commitment of all the actors involved, but also ensure that such decisions are followed by concrete steps to enable defenders, with peace of mind, to go about promoting and protecting the human rights and freedoms that every society needs.**

B. Recommendations

92. **Given the large number of recommendations regarding certain specific groups of defenders, the Special Rapporteur intends to address some of them in greater detail in future reports.**

93. **The Special Rapporteur recommends that States adopt the following measures:**

(a) **Do more to disseminate the work of defenders and to support their work through campaigns and specific communication and information activities that pay tribute, in particular, to the contributions made by certain categories of defender, such as women; defenders of the rights of lesbian, homosexual, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons; defenders working in the area of corporate social responsibility and land-related rights; defenders of the rights of minorities and indigenous peoples; and defenders who combat impunity and corruption;**

(b) Make sure that defenders can go about their work in a national framework buttressed by appropriate laws and regulations;

(c) Remove the obstacles that some domestic laws may place on the legitimate activities to promote and protect human rights conducted by defenders, including respect for the right to peaceful assembly and freedom of association;

(d) Abolish laws that discriminate against certain categories of defenders, as well as those relating to blasphemy or apostasy, so as to guarantee the right to freedom of expression, including in it the right to criticise the State, its representatives and religious authorities;

(e) Conduct impartial investigations and ensure that the perpetrators of violations against the rights of defenders are brought to justice;

(f) Invite the Special Rapporteur to visit the countries and to conduct such visits without restrictions on their duration or scope;

(g) Reply to the Special Rapporteur's communications and provide him with all the information requested to enable him to assess the situations that gave rise to the communication;

(h) Establish a national human rights institution pursuant to the Paris Principles or reform an existing one to bring it into line with those Principles and grant it a mandate covering the protection and promotion of defenders;

(i) Provide State agents, especially those who are in direct contact with communities of defenders, with the necessary training regarding the role and rights of defenders and regarding the Declaration on human rights defenders;

(j) Undertake to translate the Declaration on human rights defenders into their national language and local languages so that all defenders can have access to it;

(k) Develop, with the support of United Nations country teams, national programmes for implementing General Assembly resolution 68/181 on protecting women human rights defenders/defenders of women's rights;

(l) Consult defenders and have them actively participate in development projects, studies of the impact of such projects on human rights, and efforts to draw attention to the duty to take precautions, including during the preparation of national plans dealing with corporations and human rights.

94. **The Special Rapporteur encourages defenders and civil society to:**

(a) Facilitate the establishment of national and regional networks for the support and protection of defenders;

(b) Play an active part in promoting gender equality and combating all forms of discrimination against female defenders, including within their own organizations;

(c) Prepare special tools and materials for providing better protection to most at-risk categories of defenders and run awareness campaigns against the prejudices they sometimes face.

95. The Special Rapporteur encourages international donors and creditors and intergovernmental organizations to:

(a) Strengthen aid programmes for defenders, particularly as regards physical and digital security and to step up aid programmes, particularly those relocating defenders and legal and medical assistance programmes;

(b) Examine ways of providing pro bono legal aid to defenders, by instituting an international network of lawyers and legal experts willing to help defenders, especially in emergencies;

(c) Identify focal points responsible for defender issues in the diplomatic missions and offices of intergovernmental organizations;

(d) Encourage the translation of certain instruments such as the European Union Guidelines on Human Rights Defenders and their dissemination in all countries.

96. The Special Rapporteur encourages the United Nations to:

(a) Step up promotion of the Declaration on human rights defenders;

(b) Continue to document, and to alert the international community to, reprisals against defenders cooperating with United Nations mechanisms;

(c) Strengthen knowledge of, and attention to, defender issues in United Nations bureaux and regional and country offices. Provide training to officials in those entities regarding the mechanisms for the protection of defenders and the needs of certain specific groups of defenders; Ensure that resident coordinators systematically provide assistance and protection to human rights defenders who are threatened;

(d) Improve the dissemination of information about the situation of defenders to other regional bodies (such as regional economic partnerships or development communities);

(e) Develop new ways of interacting with defenders unable to travel to Geneva, such as distance consultations and webinar types of meetings with defenders in geographically remote areas;

(f) Ensure better access to United Nations organs for most at-risk categories of defender;

(g) Develop alternative methods to ensure access to United Nations human rights mechanisms for defenders from countries that restrict the right of association.

97. The Special Rapporteur encourages national human rights institutions to:

(a) Strengthen awareness-raising activities directed at representatives of their government and other branches of State regarding the situation of defenders in their country;

(b) Raise awareness of members and their personnel regarding the Declaration on human rights defenders and their role;

(c) Conduct regular exchanges of views with defenders and civil society and involve them in the planning and implementation of activities;

(d) Post public assurances of their support for the part played by defenders, especially those in the most exposed groups and actively collaborate with other stakeholders in cases in which defenders are in danger;

(e) Establish a point of contact or an entity dedicated to defenders, paying particular heed to groups of defenders exposed to special risks;

(f) Encourage the active participation of defenders in the preparation, implementation and evaluation of programmes and policies for their protection;

(g) Ensure that the mechanisms to protect defenders have sufficient resources and the requisite capacity to follow up on complaints received and investigate them promptly and impartially;

(h) Ensure that defenders can file complaints using various channels, including the institution's website, a hotline and instant messaging;

(i) Include in their reports a section specifically devoted to the situation of defenders.

98. **The Special Rapporteur encourages enterprises to:**

(a) Promote the work of defenders in their sector;

(b) Avoid any action aimed at hampering the work of defenders, recognizing, in particular, the right to freedom of expression, association, meeting, and demonstration.

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Report of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994

Security Council
Seventieth year

Report of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the members of the General Assembly and to the members of the Security Council the twentieth annual report of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, submitted by the President of the International Tribunal for Rwanda in accordance with article 32 of its statute (see Security Council resolution 955 (1994), annex), which states:

> "The President of the International Tribunal for Rwanda shall submit an annual report of the International Tribunal for Rwanda to the Security Council and to the General Assembly."

* A/70/150.

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Letter of transmittal

31 July 2015

I have the honour to submit the twentieth annual report of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994, dated 31 July 2015, to the General Assembly and the Security Council, pursuant to article 32 of the statute of the International Tribunal.

(*Signed*) Vagn **Joensen**
President

President of the General Assembly
United Nations
New York, NY 10017

President of the Security Council
United Nations
New York, NY 10017

Twentieth annual report of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994

Summary

The present annual report outlines the activities of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda for the period from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015.

During the past year, the Tribunal marked its twentieth anniversary and continued to work towards closure and transfer its archives and residual functions to the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals. During the reporting period, the Appeals Chamber rendered three judgements concerning four persons, bringing the total number of persons whose judgements have been completed at the appellate level to 55. The Tribunal marked the completion before 31 December 2014 of its appeals work in all but one case, with the final judgement on appeal from a trial at the Tribunal, in the multi-accused *Nyiramasuhuko et al.* (*Butare*) case, concerning six accused, expected in the fourth quarter of 2015. The work at the trial level had been completed in 2012.

The Office of the Prosecutor focused on prosecuting the remaining appeals, handing over of responsibility for tracking of fugitives to the Mechanism and providing support for national authorities in the prosecution of crimes relating to the genocide. Continuous support was also extended to Rwandan authorities to assist them in handling the cases transferred from the Tribunal. The Office of the Prosecutor also placed an emphasis on capacity-building and sharing of best practices during the reporting period, releasing several best practices manuals.

The Registry continued to provide a high level of administrative and judicial support to the Tribunal and to the Mechanism. The Registry ensured the cooperation and assistance of Member States with the Tribunal and handed over the Umusanzu Information and Documentation Centre to the Government of Rwanda. The Division of Administrative Support Services continued to ensure the efficient management of the Tribunal's downsizing process and handover to the Mechanism, while at the same time preparing staff members for a life after the Tribunal.

All organs of the Tribunal are devoting their best efforts to completing the work of the Tribunal expeditiously, and a smooth transition to the Mechanism is now well under way. Closure of the Tribunal is projected for 31 December 2015 with only liquidation of the Tribunal's assets expected to continue after that time.

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I. Introduction

1. The present twentieth annual report of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of Rwanda and Rwandan Citizens Responsible for Genocide and Other Such Violations Committed in the Territory of Neighbouring States between 1 January and 31 December 1994 outlines the activities of the Tribunal for the period from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015.

2. The Tribunal, through the Office of the President, the Chambers, the Office of the Prosecutor and the Registry, has continued its efforts to meet the goals of its completion strategy, as endorsed by the Security Council in resolution 1503 (2003), with intense appeals judgement drafting and other activities in the Appeals Chamber remaining as the Tribunal's core focus. During the reporting period, the Tribunal continued to hand over responsibilities to the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, the Arusha branch of which commenced operations on 1 July 2012. The smooth transition to the Mechanism is now well under way.

II. Activities of the Tribunal

3. As at 30 June 2015, the Tribunal consists of the Trial Chamber, the Appeals Chamber, the Office of the Prosecutor and the Registry. The President, Judge Vagn Joensen (Denmark), the Prosecutor, Hassan Bubacar Jallow (the Gambia) and the Registrar, Bongani Majola (South Africa) remain the same since the previous reporting period. The terms of the Tribunal's President and Prosecutor, who also serve as the duty judge of the Arusha branch and the Prosecutor, respectively, of the Mechanism, expire on 31 December 2015 in line with projections for completion of the Tribunal's judicial work and closure.

A. Activities of the President

1. Judicial activity

4. During the reporting period, the President issued orders and decisions on a variety of matters in his role as both President of the Tribunal and duty judge of the Arusha branch of the Mechanism. Those decisions and orders related to matters including State cooperation, review of indictments for contempt of court and false testimony, and witness protection review related to both the Tribunal and the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. The President has also appointed a bench, including himself and two Appeals Chamber judges, to review the four contempt of court/false testimony cases currently pending before the Tribunal in order to determine whether any action is required in these fugitive cases prior to the Tribunal's closure.

2. Completion strategy

5. In close cooperation with the Prosecutor and the Registrar, the President has continued to implement the Tribunal's completion strategy. On 10 December 2014 and 3 June 2015, the President presented the six-monthly completion strategy reports to the Security Council. The work at the trial level was completed in

December 2012 and only one appeal remains. In the course of the reporting period, the Tribunal issued three judgements at the appeals level concerning four persons.

6. Only one appeal from a trial judgement remains, and it is projected to be completed in the fourth quarter of 2015, with formal closure of the Tribunal expected by the end of 2015 pending only liquidation activities thereafter. Replacement of departing staff members proved difficult during the reporting period owing to replacement being a lengthy process, which even in a best-case scenario of swift and smooth replacement cannot compensate for the continuous loss of institutional memory. The Tribunal, through the President, the Prosecutor and the Registrar, reiterated its call upon the Secretariat and other relevant United Nations bodies to continue to work with the Registrar of the Tribunal in order to find practicable solutions to address the staffing situation.

7. The Security Council, in its resolution 1966 (2010) establishing the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals, requested the Secretary-General to make the practical arrangements necessary for the commencement of the Mechanism's operations. Under the direction of the Office of Legal Affairs of the Secretariat, the Tribunal has worked closely with the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia and the Mechanism to implement that mandate. The Mechanism successfully opened its Arusha branch on 1 July 2012, following which most judicial and prosecutorial functions have now been handed over from the Tribunal to the Mechanism. The remaining functions are being handed over on a continuous basis at the appropriate time, as agreed upon by the Tribunal and the Mechanism and in line with the Transitional Arrangements and resolution 1966 (2010).

3. Diplomatic relations and other representation

8. The President maintained regular contact with United Nations Headquarters and the diplomatic community in the host country, at the seat of the United Nations, and in other countries. The United Nations Secretariat, and in particular the Office of Legal Affairs, provided important legal advice and diplomatic support to ensure smooth cooperation between the Tribunal, the Security Council and the General Assembly. During the reporting period, the Office of the President also organized workshops on best practices and lessons learned by the ad hoc and hybrid international tribunals and the International Criminal Court. Reports from the two workshops, held in The Hague in September 2014 and May 2015, will be used by the international tribunals and the International Criminal Court to continue the work towards improving efficiency in the administration of international justice.

9. On the occasion of their briefings before the Security Council, both the President and the Prosecutor of the Tribunal participated in meetings of the Security Council Informal Working Group on International Tribunals. That allowed for comprehensive and open discussions with the legal advisers of the members of the Security Council. The Registrar also participated in the June 2015 meeting of the Informal Working Group in order to provide detailed information on the plans for liquidation of the Tribunal's assets following closure.

10. The President continued to work closely with the Registrar to engage in diplomatic efforts towards the relocation of persons acquitted by the Tribunal and those convicted persons who have completed their sentences and have been released from the United Nations Detention Facility in the United Republic of Tanzania through 31 December 2014, at which time the Mechanism assumed that

responsibility. The President and the Registrar continue to work with the Mechanism with the shared goal of increasing cooperation of Member States on the issue of relocation, which will be required in order for the Mechanism to be successful in implementing its strategic plan for relocation that was presented to the Security Council Informal Working Group on International Tribunals in June 2015.

B. Activities of coordination mechanisms

1. Coordination Council

11. The Coordination Council, consisting of the President, the Prosecutor and the Registrar, met regularly to discuss issues affecting the Tribunal, such as the completion strategy, closure plans, staffing, cooperation with the Mechanism and budgetary and financial matters.

2. Plenary session

12. During the reporting period, the Tribunal held its twenty-fifth and final plenary session on 13 May 2015 at The Hague, the Netherlands. The session featured the re-election of the President for a term until 31 December 2015 to coincide with his term of office as judge, as well as the amendment of rule 18 (B) of the Rules of Procedure and Evidence.

3. Rules Committee

13. The Rules Committee submits or discusses proposals for amendments of the Rules of Procedure and Evidence. During the reporting period, the Committee submitted a proposal for addition of text to rule 18 (B), which was considered and adopted at the twenty-fifth plenary session of judges. The text adopted at the plenary session and the most up-to-date version of the Rules of Procedure and Evidence may be found on the Tribunal's website.

C. Activity of the Chambers

1. Composition of the Chambers

14. The Chambers currently comprise one Trial Chamber and one Appeals Chamber and are currently composed of nine permanent judges in the Appeals Chamber and one ad litem judge serving as President.

15. The one remaining ad litem judge, President Vagn Joensen (Denmark), is a member of the Trial Chamber. During the reporting period two permanent judges of the Appeals Chamber who were from the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda demitted office upon completion of their work: Judges William H. Sekule (United Republic of Tanzania) and Mehmet Güney (Turkey). One permanent judge of the Appeals Chamber who was from the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia also demitted office during the reporting period upon completion of his work: Judge Patrick Robinson (Jamaica).

16. Following the above-described departures, nine permanent judges currently sit on the Appeals Chamber. Four of them are from the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, namely, Judges Arlette Ramaroson (Madagascar), Khalida Rachid

Khan (Pakistan), Bakhtiyar Tuzmukhamedov (Russian Federation) and Mandiaye Niang (Senegal). The five other permanent judges on the Appeals Chamber are from the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, namely, Judges Theodor Meron (United States of America) as presiding judge, Fausto Pocar (Italy), Liu Daqun (China), Carmel Agius (Malta) and Koffi Afande (Togo).

2. Principal activity of the Trial Chamber and the Appeals Chamber

(a) Trial Chamber

17. The substantive work before the Trial Chamber is complete.

(b) Appeals Chamber

18. During the reporting period, the Appeals Chamber was seized of appeals from four judgements concerning 10 persons. The Appeals Chamber rendered three final judgements concerning four persons, and 25 pre-appeal orders and decisions.

Appeal judgements: *Karemera and Ngirumpatse*, *Nizeyimana* and *Nzabonimana*

19. On 21 December 2011, Trial Chamber III convicted Édouard Karemera, former Minister of the Interior and Communal Development, and Matthieu Ngirumpatse, former National Party Chairman of the Mouvement républicain national pour la démocratie et le développement (MRND), of direct and public incitement to commit genocide, genocide, extermination and rape as crimes against humanity, and murder as a serious violation of article 3 common to the Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocol II. The Trial Chamber sentenced Karemera and Ngirumpatse to life imprisonment. The Appeals Chamber heard the parties' appeals in February 2014 and pronounced its judgement on 29 September 2014. The Appeals Chamber affirmed Karemera's and Ngirumpatse's convictions, while it reversed certain findings of the Trial Chamber, and also affirmed their sentences of life imprisonment.

20. On 19 June 2012, Trial Chamber III convicted Ildéphonse Nizeyimana, former captain in the Rwandan army, of genocide, extermination and murder as crimes against humanity, and murder as a serious violation of article 3 common to the Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocol II thereto. The Trial Chamber sentenced Nizeyimana to life imprisonment. The Appeals Chamber heard the parties' appeals in April 2014 and pronounced its judgement on 29 September 2014. The Appeals Chamber reversed Nizeyimana's convictions based on some events, including his conviction for extermination as a crime against humanity, but affirmed his convictions for genocide and murder as a crime against humanity and as a serious violation of article 3 common to the Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocol II thereto. The Appeals Chamber set aside the life sentence and imposed a sentence of 35 years of imprisonment.

21. On 31 May 2012, Trial Chamber III convicted Callixte Nzabonimana, former Minister of Youth and Associative Movements, of instigating genocide, conspiracy to commit genocide, direct and public incitement to commit genocide, and extermination as a crime against humanity, sentencing him to life imprisonment. The Appeals Chamber heard the parties' appeals in April 2014 and pronounced its judgement on 29 September 2014. While reversing Nzabonimana's convictions based on certain events, the Appeals Chamber affirmed his convictions for

instigating genocide, conspiracy to commit genocide, direct and public incitement to commit genocide, and extermination as a crime against humanity. The Appeals Chamber also affirmed his life sentence.

Further appeals from judgement

22. The delivery of the three appeal judgements in September 2014 brought the total number of appeal judgements rendered by the Tribunal to 44, disposing of appeals concerning 55 persons. Deliberations are now in progress in the final case, *Nyiramasuhuko et al.* (also known as the *Butare* case), which concerns six convicted persons, in which the Appeals Chamber heard oral arguments in April 2015.

D. Activities of the Office of the Prosecutor

23. During the reporting period, the work of the Office of the Prosecutor focused on three main areas: completion of remaining appeals and other ongoing litigation; support on a double-hatting basis for core work undertaken by the Office of the Prosecutor of the Mechanism; and compilation of lessons learned and best practices. As progress in completing its work continued, the Office of the Prosecutor implemented additional staff reductions, resulting in the separation of 15 staff members effective 31 December 2014 and a further separation of nine staff members effective 15 May 2015. With this reduction in staffing, the Office of the Prosecutor of the Mechanism continued to assume greater responsibility for all ongoing prosecutorial functions.

24. On 29 September 2014, the Appeals Chamber returned final judgement in the *Karemera and Ngirumpatse*, *Nizeyimana* and *Nzabonimana* cases. It affirmed most of the defendants' substantive convictions for genocide and other crimes, and confirmed the trial chambers' imposition of life sentences against Karemera, Ngirumpatse and Nzabonimana but reduced Nizeyimana's life sentence to 35 years' imprisonment in the light of its reversal of some of his convictions.

25. Litigation in connection with the Tribunal's last appeal, the *Butare* case, continued. As previously reported, the *Butare* case is comprised of six defence appeals and one prosecution appeal. It has generated an unusually high volume of motions before the Appeals Chamber, based primarily on alleged disclosure violations and defence requests for the admission of additional evidence on appeal. The Appeals Chamber has now decided all but one of the pending motions, denying most requests for relief except for allowing the admission of two pieces of additional evidence on appeal. On 26 May 2015, the prosecution filed rebuttal evidence in response to this newly admitted evidence. It is not yet certain whether any further hearing will be required to address this newly admitted evidence. The only motion pending at present before the Appeals Chamber is a defence motion, filed on 4 June 2015, to strike the prosecution's rebuttal evidence.

26. The other principal litigation function completed by the Office of the Prosecutor during the reporting period involved the review and update of disclosure obligations in all completed cases. In the process, the Office of the Prosecutor prepared comprehensive records of all past disclosure, search criteria, and analysis for handover to the Office of the Prosecutor of the Mechanism. Legal staff within the Office of the Prosecutor continued to assist on a double-hatting basis the Office of the Prosecutor of the Mechanism in carrying out other key transitional functions,

including conducting ongoing litigation and archiving official records. In terms of litigation, the Office of the Prosecutor assisted Mechanism prosecutors with defence of the appeal in *The Prosecutor v. Augustin Ngirabatware* case, and responding to multiple requests for the revocation of cases referred to national jurisdictions for trial. On 18 December 2014, the Mechanism Appeals Chamber affirmed Ngirabatware's convictions for direct and public incitement to commit genocide, as well as for instigating and aiding and abetting genocide. It reversed Ngirabatware's conviction for rape as a crime against humanity, and reduced his sentence from 35 to 20 years' imprisonment.

27. With regard to the referral of cases to national jurisdictions, the Office of the Prosecutor supported the Mechanism in investigating and responding to requests for revocation of referral orders filed by Bernard Munyagishari and Jean Uwinkindi. On 8 April 2015, the President of the Mechanism dismissed Munyagishari's third request for revocation, without prejudice to refiling. On 13 May 2015, the President of the Mechanism appointed a trial chamber to consider Uwinkindi's request for revocation. On 22 May 2015, the pretrial judge assigned to Uwinkindi's request issued a scheduling order for briefing in connection with the revocation proceedings. Briefs have not yet been filed.

28. The Office of the Prosecutor also continued to transfer to the Mechanism's Office of the Prosecutor responsibility for the management and preservation of its official records and archives. In April 2015, the entire vault of the Office of the Prosecutor containing the evidence collection was transferred to the Arusha branch of the Mechanism's Office of the Prosecutor. The total number of transfers since the last report amounted to 1,309 boxes of evidence records measuring 187 linear metres, 1,575 boxes of Prosecution records measuring 225 linear metres and 539 boxes consisting of investigation files measuring 77 linear metres. That makes it 3,423 boxes of archival paper records measuring 489 linear metres transferred to the Office of the Prosecutor of the Mechanism. In addition, the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda has transferred a further 425 video tapes of evidence consisting of 402 hours, digitized and migrated in a new higher format for long-term preservation. The processing of prosecutorial records continues, with the appraisal and security classification of all records of the Office of the Prosecutor, until the delivery of the *Butare* appeal judgement.

29. The last main area of work undertaken by the Office of the Prosecutor during the reporting period related to the preservation of lessons learned and best practices. On 4 and 5 November 2014, the Office of the Prosecutor hosted the Seventh Colloquium of International Prosecutors. The Colloquium was part of broader legacy events organized by the Tribunal to mark its twentieth anniversary and attracted nearly 100 international and national prosecutors to consider ways of promoting accountability at the national level. On 11 February 2015, the Office of the Prosecutor released a best practices manual on the referral of international criminal cases to national jurisdictions. An updated digest of Appeals Chamber judgements of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda and the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia was completed in June 2015. Work on other projects, including a summary of factual findings from all Tribunal judgements, remains under way and is anticipated to be completed in time for the Tribunal's planned closing event. Upon closure, the Office of the Prosecutor also shall submit a formal closing report to the Security Council, detailing many of the key challenges and accomplishments it has faced over the past 20 years of operation.

E. Activities of the Registry

1. Office of the Registrar

30. The Office of the Registrar is responsible, inter alia, for providing support to the Chambers and the Office of the Prosecutor, including providing diplomatic liaison with Member States on a variety of issues, including those designed to meet the requirements of both the defence teams and the Office of the Prosecutor. It is also responsible for the administration of the Tribunal, including human resources and financial management. During the period from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015, the Office of the Registrar provided effective court management and filing services to both organs of the Tribunal as well as the Appeals Chamber. It supported the holding of the oral hearings in the *Butare* case as well as judicial filings involving pending contempt cases. It also continued to provide administrative support to defence lawyers, including securing cooperation from Member States.

31. During the period under review, the main activities of the Office of the Registrar focused on supporting the conclusion of the remaining appeals, engaging Member States on a variety of issues, providing support to the Mechanism and preparing the records of the Tribunal for archiving and handover to the Mechanism necessary to achieve an orderly closure of the Tribunal.

32. The Office of the Registrar continued to act as the channel of communication between the Tribunal and the diplomatic community. As such, the Office maintained high-level diplomatic contacts with Member States, international organizations and non-governmental organizations. During the reporting period, the Office of the Registrar transmitted more than 114 notes verbales and other correspondence related to the operations of the Tribunal, in particular, to secure support and cooperation from Member States with respect to the remaining appeal cases and the relocation of the acquitted and released persons. The function of relocating and looking after the acquitted and released persons was transferred to the Mechanism on 1 January 2015. The Registry also dealt with a number of inquiries and requests for legal assistance from national jurisdictions.

33. The Office of the Registrar also assisted the Mechanism with its function of monitoring the cases of *Uwinkindi* and *Munyagishari* that were referred to Rwanda for trial, as well as the two cases referred to France.

34. The Registrar continued to work closely with the President to deploy all efforts to find host countries for the now eight remaining acquitted persons and three released convicts. In this regard, until the end of 2014 when the function was handed over to the Mechanism, the Registrar visited a number of Member States in Africa, Europe and South America and also engaged the Government of Rwanda and the African Union with the aim of finding a solution to the problem of relocation. During the period under review, the Tribunal has continued to encounter obstacles in relocating these individuals, though there has been one positive development to report. In September 2014, Belgium granted a family reunion visa to one acquitted person, General Augustin Ndindiliyimana, and allowed him to move to Belgium immediately. The Tribunal will continue until its closure to assist the Mechanism in implementing its strategic plan to find a sustainable solution to this issue.

35. The Tribunal welcomed in Arusha a total of 1,732 visitors, including high-level United Nations and government officials, academics, civil society,

non-governmental organizations and the general public, during the reporting period. The Office of the Registrar also managed the wide dissemination of information about the Tribunal's activities by means of press meetings, newsletters and press releases as well as the website, films and information brochures in English, French and Kinyarwanda. During the period under review, the Office of the Registrar introduced some public information literature in the Kiswahili language, the most popular language in the East and Central African region, to further promote the work of the Tribunal. Through its External Relations Communication and Outreach Unit, the Office distributed more than 5,000 copies of the Tribunal's Cartoon Book as well as more than 3,500 copies of other brochures in English, French and Kiswahili, which is part of the Tribunal's youth sensitization project in the five East African countries, namely, Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania. It also briefed the more than 1,700 visitors, including students, academics, military officers, media practitioners and government and non-government officials as well as members of the public, who visited and toured the Tribunal. Media outreach events and exhibitions were held in Arusha, Kigali, Dar es Salaam, Nairobi and Johannesburg.

36. At these events, film screenings, talks and discussions on the work of the Tribunal were held. The Unit also processed numerous local and international media enquiries and broadcast via satellite court proceedings in the cases of *The Prosecutor v. Nyiramasuhuko et al.*; *The Prosecutor v. Augustin Ngirabatware*; *The Prosecutor v. Édouard Karemera and Matthieu Ngirumpatse*; *The Prosecutor v. Ildéphonse Nizeyimana*; and *The Prosecutor v. Callixte Nzabonimana*. The Office of the Registrar maintains an open line of communication with universities and other educational institutions in the region. In November 2014, the Office participated in planning and organizing the twentieth anniversary events of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in Arusha, which brought together hundreds of scholars and legal practitioners as well as politicians, government officials and media practitioners from all corners of the world. Apart from distributing public information materials during the event, the Tribunal also launched a new short film on its work which is now posted on the Tribunal's website. In April 2015, the Tribunal participated in an event held to commemorate the twenty-first anniversary of the Rwandan Genocide in Dar es Salaam. The event was jointly organized by the United Nations Offices in the United Republic of Tanzania, the Rwanda High Commission and the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania. The Tribunal set up two major exhibitions of its work during the commemoration event.

37. The Umusanzu Information and Documentation Centre in Kigali and 10 additional provincial information centres located across Rwanda continued to play a key role in promoting outreach activities of the Tribunal through information dissemination, improved communication and access to the jurisprudence and other legal materials of the Tribunal. The centres are visited daily by members of the Rwandan judiciary, students, researchers and the public, who are provided with informative materials and have access to briefings, training, library services, video screenings and the Internet.

38. Significantly, the Umusanzu Information and Documentation Centre continued to receive greater awareness and use by senior government officials, including members of the military, and the police. The Centre was also regularly visited and used by civil society organizations from Rwanda and other countries, including Canada, Ethiopia, Nigeria, South Africa, the Sudan, Switzerland and the United

States of America, which are on official study and/or attachment visits in Rwanda. The Tribunal handed over the Umusanzu Information and Documentation Centre to the Government of Rwanda on 30 December 2014.

39. The Office of the Registrar continued its partnership with the Department of Public Information of the United Nations Secretariat in promoting outreach in Rwanda through the Centre.

Archives

40. During the period under review, the Tribunal continued with the preparation of its records, including hard copies, born-digital/electronic and audiovisual records for transfer to and management by the Mechanism. In order to ensure the smooth transfer of the remaining records, the Tribunal continued to collaborate very closely with the Mechanism in that regard, especially to ensure that the records are prepared in a manner that will facilitate their effective management by the Mechanism after transfer. During the reporting period, the Tribunal developed and implemented a strategic framework for the three components of the archiving project in order to streamline the preparation and transfer of its records:

(a) Digital/Electronic Records Management Project: The measures that have been taken to prepare for the disposition of the digital records include an appraisal and re-housing of the records in systems across the Tribunal, including shared drives and personal workspaces, and the planning and implementation of the transfer process. In this regard, focus was placed on the folders from offices where long-term to permanent records are created.

(i) The Tribunal is also implementing an E-mail Capture Project, to capture both legacy and current e-mail accounts of staff members who played a significant role in the history of the Tribunal, excluding the e-mail accounts of all judges and Chambers staff who are considered out of scope because of their involvement in judicial deliberations. An automatic harvesting tool had been set up to capture and redirect Capstone accounts from the restored tapes to individual folders on the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda server. These tapes will be transferred to the Mechanism, along with the de-duplicated Capstone account folders.

(ii) The December 2014 asset transfer of the Tower Records and Information Management (TRIM) as well as DIVA Content Storage Management systems, comprising, respectively, 755 gigabytes of judicial and administrative records as well as 781 terabytes of audiovisual records, represented a huge milestone for the Tribunal's Archiving Project. The technical management of four remaining data sets is being carried out by the Mechanism.

(b) Audiovisual Redaction Project: At the end of 2013, a target was set for 6,000 hours each of redacted video material in English, French and Kinyarwanda to be handed over to the Mechanism at the close of the Audiovisual Redaction Project in December 2014. These video files were in addition to the audio files that had been previously completed. By the previously anticipated close of the project on 31 December 2014, a total of 6,488 hours of video footage had been marked for redaction, surpassing the 6,000-hour goal for this stage of the work. At this point, most of the marked material had passed quality control and 5,851 hours had undergone the final assembling of audio tracks and archiving stage of the workflow,

leaving a balance of 637 hours yet to be completed. All the outstanding wrapping and archiving was completed by a Tribunal skeleton team by 15 April 2015.

(c) Physical Records Management Project: During the reporting period the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda made significant progress in the preparation and transfer of physical records to the Mechanism. The revised Retention Schedule of the Tribunal, which addresses some gaps in the approved 2012 version, has officially been approved for implementation by the Office of Legal Affairs. As at 30 June 2015, the Tribunal had transferred to the Mechanism 1,812 linear metres of physical records out of an estimated total of 2,267 linear metres of records with long-term to permanent value anticipated for transfer by its closure in 2015. The overall transfer progress is currently 80 per cent of the revised estimates projected for transfer, with more than 96 per cent of judicial records already transferred to the Mechanism.

2. Judicial and Legal Affairs Section

41. During the reporting period, the Judicial and Legal Affairs Section provided legal support to the appeals process, the Office of the President and the Registrar and supervision of activities related to court management, defence counsel, detainees at the United Nations Detention Facility and acquitted and convicted persons released in the United Republic of Tanzania.

42. During the period under review, the Section provided court management support services to the judicial processes of the Tribunal and the Mechanism, including the provision of minutes and transcripts of appellate proceedings in the following cases: *Nizeyimana, Nzabonimana, Karemera and Ngirumpatse* and *Nyiramasuhuko et al.* It continued to prepare judicial records for transfer to the Mechanism. The Section also provided support to the Chambers, the Office of the Prosecutor and the appointed amici curiae in the pending four cases of contempt/false testimony currently under review by a specially appointed chamber.

43. As part of its support to defence counsel and detainees (throughout the reporting period) and its support to acquitted and convicted persons released in the United Republic of Tanzania (through 31 December 2014), the Section provided essential services, including the management of payments to defence counsel and attending to requests from detainees and released persons in the United Republic of Tanzania related to services provided by the Tribunal.

44. During the period under review, the Section worked closely with the Mechanism on matters related to witness and victims' support by preparing witness files for handover in completed cases before the Tribunal. In accordance with protective measures ordered by the Chambers, transcripts were redacted to expunge identifying information concerning witnesses or their family members prior to the transcripts being made public.

45. During the reporting period, the Section also assisted the Division of Administrative Support Services in its important legal advisory role for issues pertaining to the proper implementation and interpretation of United Nations administrative rules. The Section assisted the Office of the Registrar with staff members' appeals related to the downsizing and retention processes, matters affecting staff members' terms of appointment or contract of employment, and

investigations of allegations and misconduct, in some cases in collaboration with the Office of Internal Oversight Services.

46. The United Nations Detention Facility, as at 30 June 2015, housed a total inmate population of 13 detained persons. Those include 6 convicted persons awaiting appeals judgements and 7 convicted persons awaiting orders for transfer for the enforcement of sentences by the Mechanism.

47. The Language Services Section continued to provide interpretation and translation services in English, French and Kinyarwanda to the Tribunal and the Mechanism during proceedings conducted before the Appeals Chamber and the Mechanism. In this regard, the Section processed documents emanating from the Mechanism, the Appeals Chamber and the parties (prosecution and defence). It also provided the same services to the Office of the Prosecutor, the Registry and other Tribunal and Mechanism departments. During the reporting period, in addition to translating trial and appeals judgements and decisions from the accrued backlog, the Section received a number of documents for translation, including five appeal briefs and many other appeal-related filings from different parties, numerous decisions as well as other judicial and administrative documents from the Appeals Chamber, the Registry, the Office of the Prosecutor and the Office of the President. The Section also received numerous documents from the Mechanism for translation, including reports, submissions, decisions, orders and documents relating to transferred cases and judgements from Rwandan courts. Given the reduction in the number of court sessions, interpreters have continued to assume a significant portion of the translation workload, thereby enabling the Section to substantially improve delivery times in the first half of the reporting period. However, with the drastic reduction in staff in December 2014 in compliance with the Tribunal's completion strategy, it is becoming increasingly difficult to cope with the workload of documents from the Appeals Chamber, the Mechanism and the Office of the Prosecutor requiring translation, while at the same time continuing to cope with the backlog of remaining trial and appeals judgements. It has become imperative to prioritize requests and deal with them as and when possible.

48. Since 1 January 2014, the Legal Library and Reference Unit, formerly in the Judicial and Legal Affairs Section of the Tribunal, has been managed by the Mechanism. Information on its collection and projects may therefore be found in the Mechanism's annual report.

3. Division of Administrative Support Services

49. The Division of Administrative Support Services carries the responsibility of providing a wide range of services, such as budget and finance, medical services, security, travel, human resources, training and counselling services, buildings management and property control. During the reporting period, the Division also provided some administrative services to the Mechanism in line with the provisions of Security Council resolution 1966 (2010).

50. The Division is currently involved in the preparations for the implementation of Umoja under Cluster 4. In addition, it continues to liquidate excess assets that are no longer required in line with the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda liquidation plan.

51. The process of downsizing continued to pose major challenges to the operations of the entire Tribunal, and the Division has continued to respond to those challenges in a proactive and flexible manner. Staff retention exercises were conducted in order to determine the number and composition of staff to be retained until the completion of the Tribunal's work.

52. The Human Resources and Planning Section continued to undertake a smooth and objective downsizing process with respect to the large number of staff separating from the Tribunal. Repatriation, relocation and career counselling, in addition to the other staff administration and recruitment activities, made up the majority of the workload of the Section during the reporting period. In 2003, the Tribunal staff originated from 87 different countries. As at 30 June 2015, the staff were from 52 different countries.

53. With more than 50 per cent of the Tribunal's workforce consisting of staff members who have been with the Tribunal since its inception, the looming closure and few options for future jobs has been a source of stress and concern that the Tribunal has to deal with as part of the completion strategy. In the area of human resources management, it should also be noted that since its inception, the Tribunal has continuously grappled with the challenges of attracting and retaining qualified staff for the following reasons:

(a) The ad hoc nature of the Tribunal as an organization with a limited lifespan was an impediment to attracting and retaining qualified and dedicated professionals at the Tribunal;

(b) Arusha was not very attractive as a duty station and many people were reluctant in the beginning to come and work there;

(c) Although the statute of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda was clear, what has never been clear was the status granted to the Tribunal's staff and whether they belonged to the United Nations Secretariat or not;

(d) Short-term contracts with limited benefits also adversely affected the recruitment and retention of staff. Many people were reluctant to come and work in Arusha, and the short duration of contracts issued to current staff members continued to contribute to increased uncertainty and to have a negative impact on productivity. Some of the limitations to temporary appointments have the potential to create a negative impact on the timely liquidation of the Tribunal's assets and liabilities, which is also part of the completion strategy.

Staff retention process of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda

54. An important part of the completion strategy of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda was the establishment of a staff retention policy. The Tribunal's retention policy was a result of the decision to downsize staff towards the closure of the Tribunal. The retention exercise, being a top priority of the management, entailed the continuation of the Tribunal's work with a reduced workforce. The retention process centred on the following issues: determining who would be retained, how such a determination would be made, preventing essential staff from leaving *en masse*, and coping with the mass separations. To address the situation, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda adopted an ad hoc review mechanism that entailed the establishment of a retention task force to propose review criteria, the establishment of section retention panels and the appointment of

an advisory retention review committee to review contentious cases and make recommendations to the management.

Exceptional measures

55. In order to assist the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in retaining the staff it needs to complete its work before the scheduled closure date, the Office of Human Resources Management of the Secretariat was extremely cooperative in providing to the Tribunal and its sister tribunal, the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, within the boundaries of the rules, some exceptional measures in the areas of staff administration and recruitment. Those measures were intended to provide much needed motivation in the retention of essential staff to complete the work of the Tribunal. One of the measures of significant importance was the authority to extend the services of staff beyond the age of retirement, so as not to bring any disruption in the work, to preserve institutional memories at a crucial time, and to avoid lengthy recruitment procedures.

56. The Career Development and Counselling Unit is implementing a four-pronged strategy to support the completion of the Tribunal's mandate, as follows:

(a) Training programmes to support personal and professional transition of staff, aimed at providing management and staff with skills to meet the challenges of organizational change and downsizing, multitasking and double-hatting. They also aim to provide staff with skills to successfully make the transition to another job, self-employment or retirement, as the case may be;

(b) Programmes to support completion of operations: these are technical training programmes aimed at helping sections to complete their operations successfully, either to close down or transfer functions to the Mechanism;

(c) Stress counselling and coaching support during the completion process: this aims to help staff and their families to deal with the stress and challenges of the downsizing, and to coach them on issues such as interview preparation, career planning, problem solving and decision-making;

(d) Provision of welfare support to separating and relocating staff and families: this is aimed at providing practical help and information during separation and relocation, and promoting physical fitness and social well-being of the Tribunal's staff and families during the final period of the Tribunal.

57. The Security and Safety Section continued to support the Tribunal and the Mechanism's Arusha branch in ensuring the safety and security of their staff, premises, assets and operations through implementation of United Nations security management system policies, including the Minimum Operating Residential Security Standards (MORSS) and the Minimum Operating Security Standards (MOSS). With the ever-increasing levels of insecurity in the East Africa region exacerbated by recent arrests of Al-Shabaab sympathizers, including the recovery of significant amounts of explosive materials, the Section has continued to promote close collaboration with the host government authorities in monitoring security trends and ensuring that appropriate measures are in place to provide adequate notification and implementation of well-rehearsed mitigating measures for United Nations staff in the Arusha/Kilimanjaro regions.

58. The Health Services Unit was instrumental, as one of the administrative support services, for the smooth running of court sessions and of the Tribunal in general. The Unit essentially provided curative and preventive care and trauma counselling support, and performed medico-administrative duties for staff members and officials of the Tribunal and the Mechanism and their dependants. It is also responsible for providing medical services to detainees, witnesses, victims and acquitted persons. This provision of medical care allowed detainees and witnesses to attend scheduled court sessions easily without absenteeism or delays for health reasons.

59. The Information Technology Services Section continues to support the Mechanism's information technology infrastructure in Arusha and Kigali and sustaining services required by the Tribunal through this final stage of its completion strategy.

60. In the area of resources management, the Budget and Finance Section continued to provide expertise on proper planning, control and monitoring of the utilization of available resources as well as timely and reliable services to staff members and clients of the Tribunal. The Tribunal's first set of financial statements compliant with the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) was produced and is currently with the United Nations Board of Auditors for its review. Preparations for the implementation of Umoja are also ongoing.

61. The General Services Section provided vital support to the Tribunal, which included realignment of office space, preparing administrative documents for archiving, construction of a temporary archives facility, general repairs and maintenance and asset control and management. During the reporting period, Building Management Services continued to review use of office space in line with the completion strategy, and apart from the staff of the Office of the Prosecutor, all Tribunal staff members have been consolidated into one wing of the Arusha International Conference Centre complex. All courtrooms, apart from the one being retained for the use of the Appeals Chamber and the Mechanism, have been dismantled and the space has been reorganized or returned to the landlord. Among the Section's achievements were the gradual reduction of office space usage from a peak of 10,859.00 square metres in 2003 to 6,083.83 square metres as of 1 July 2015. The temporary archives facility has also been handed over to the Mechanism. Liquidation of assets has continued in earnest. As at 30 October 2013, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda had 2,635 non-expendables worth $12,324,199.14, 3,925 expendables, excluding furniture, worth $1,881,843.46 and 267,238 consumables valued at $1,602,508.24. By 30 June 2015 there were 2,174 non-expendables remaining valued at $9,605,976.44, 2,567 expendables valued at $1,171,639.53 and 83,766 consumables worth $941,080.94. These achievements were remarkable not least because they had been brought to fruition in the face of challenges such as staff reduction and the combination of going into liquidation with preparation for the implementation of Umoja.

62. With the impending closure of the Tribunal, the main function of the Procurement Section has been the disposal of the Tribunal's assets and transferring those that may be utilized by the Mechanism into its custody. During the reporting period, the procurement workload has also increased owing to demands for the procurement, shipping and clearing of items procured for the Mechanism.

63. The Administrative Legal Services Unit has continued to play an important legal advisory role for issues pertaining to the proper implementation and

interpretation of United Nations administrative rules, cases relating to the privileges and immunities of staff regarding civil and criminal cases, and disputes related to domestic employees of Tribunal staff members. In addition, the Unit has been assisting the Registrar with appeals related to the downsizing and retention processes, performance evaluations and investigations of allegations and misconduct in collaboration with the Office of Internal Oversight Services. The Unit has also been responsible for coordination activities of all other oversight bodies.

III. Conclusion

64. The Tribunal has made significant achievements during the past year towards the goals of the completion strategy in the face of a very high workload, and significant progress was made on the appeals and on the transition to the Mechanism. The reporting period continued to see concrete progress towards closure of the Tribunal, which is now expected by the end of 2015. In the final months, the focus is now entirely on the transition to the Mechanism and the completion of the one remaining appeal in an efficient and timely manner without compromising fair trial rights.

65. State cooperation remains the cornerstone for the ability of the Tribunal to complete its mandate and for the Mechanism to continue its residual functions. The Tribunal appreciates the continued trust and support of Member States, especially on crucial matters that have now been transferred to the Mechanism, including tracking efforts with respect to the remaining fugitives. The Mechanism will require, however, increased cooperation with respect to its efforts to relocate acquitted persons and those convicted persons released in the United Republic of Tanzania. In this respect, the President and the Registrar continued their efforts to find States for relocation during the first half of the reporting period, after which that responsibility was handed over to the Mechanism on 1 January 2015. The Tribunal hopes that Member States will actively contribute to finding a meaningful solution.

66. Finally, as the Tribunal continues to separate staff pursuant to the completion strategy, the request for absorption of the Tribunal's staff members into the United Nations system is re-emphasized. The Tribunal would appreciate increased support from Member States in addressing its numerous challenges.

67. The Tribunal's efforts regarding capacity-building, training and education, which have now expanded beyond East Africa, remained strong during the reporting period. This included events marking the twentieth anniversary of the Tribunal's creation and the sharing of best practices and lessons learned with other international tribunals and domestic authorities through workshops, best practices manuals and training.

68. The closure of the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda is imminent, and an event to mark the Tribunal's closure is planned for November 2015. By the end of 2015, the Tribunal will be in its liquidation phase and the Mechanism will have fully assumed jurisdiction and responsibility for residual functions and the archives of the Tribunal. In order to achieve what is necessary prior to closure, the Tribunal again calls upon the international community to provide it with the support necessary to achieve completion of its mandate.

United Nations A/70/219

General Assembly

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31 July 2015

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Seventieth session
Item 88 of the provisional agenda*
Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency

Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency

Note by the Secretary-General**

1. The fifty-ninth report of the International Atomic Energy Agency, for the calendar year 2014 (GC(59)/7), is submitted herewith to the General Assembly. Major developments since the report was published will be covered by the annual statement of the Director General of the Agency to the General Assembly. The report has been transmitted in accordance with the provisions of article III, paragraph 1 (a), of the Agreement governing the relationship between the United Nations and the International Atomic Energy Agency (General Assembly resolution 1145 (XII), annex).

2. As only a limited number of copies of the report are available, it has not been possible to make a full distribution. Delegations are therefore requested to have the copies transmitted to them available during the discussion of this item.

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* A/70/150.

** The annual reports, in all languages, are printed in Vienna in August of each year as part of the documentation for the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency. A specified number of copies are sent to the United Nations as part of the documentation for the General Assembly.

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Item 58 of the provisional agenda*

Questions relating to information

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 69/96 B, provides highlights of recent communications campaigns of the Department of Public Information of the Secretariat on such issues as the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations, the post-2015 development agenda, and peace and security, as well as on youth and education outreach. The activities of the network of United Nations information centres, a key component of the Department's outreach to the world's peoples, are also reviewed. The report highlights the Department's traditional media-related products and services as well as its social media content, and gives details of the Department's efforts to provide multilingual content across all media platforms. Its partnerships with non-governmental organizations and institutions of higher learning and research are also highlighted. The culture of evaluation is dealt with in a separate section.

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I. Introduction

1. In paragraph 99 of its resolution 69/96 B, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to the Committee on Information at its thirty-seventh session and to the Assembly at its seventieth session on the activities of the Department of Public Information and on the implementation of all recommendations and requests contained in the resolution. Accordingly, the Department submitted three reports for consideration by the Committee at its thirty-seventh session, held from 27 April to 8 May 2015 (A/AC.198/2015/2, A/AC.198/2015/3 and A/AC.198/2015/4). The deliberations of the Committee with regard to those reports are reflected in the report of the Committee on its thirty-seventh session (A/70/21).

2. The present report contains updates to the information provided to the Committee on Information at its thirty-seventh session, including a summary of activities undertaken by the Department from March to September 2015 through its three subprogrammes: strategic communications services, news services and outreach and knowledge services.

II. Strategic communications services, including United Nations information centres

A. Human rights

3. As part of its continuing efforts to promote and encourage respect for human rights, the Department produced a new illustrated version of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and materials for the Human Rights up Front initiative. It promoted the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (21 March) and the newly launched International Decade for People of African Descent, including through website and social media updates, the production of advocacy videos and the design and printing of posters and pins.

4. The Department supported the fourteenth session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (20 April-1 May), including through a social media advocacy campaign and photography project entitled "We Are Indigenous." It also promoted coverage of the International Day of the World's Indigenous People (9 August).

5. For the twenty-first commemoration of the International Day of Reflection on the Genocide in Rwanda (7 April), the Department organized a memorial ceremony at United Nations Headquarters, in cooperation with the Permanent Mission of Rwanda. Memorial ceremonies, educational briefings, film screenings and multimedia exhibitions were also organized by the Department's field offices in Belgium, Burkina Faso, Burundi, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kenya, Madagascar, South Africa, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia, among others.

6. The Department served as the secretariat for the newly established United Nations Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela Prize. It developed a web presence, undertook promotional activities, including social media coverage for the Prize, and coordinated the call for nominations and the screening process for nominees, as well

as managing the design and production of the actual Prize. Working closely with the Office of the President of the General Assembly, it arranged the award ceremony for the two laureates, held during the observance at United Nations Headquarters of Nelson Mandela International Day. The Day was also marked by a public service activity organized by the Department with the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation programme "GreenThumb" and supported by the Permanent Mission of South Africa to the United Nations. A number of United Nations information centres also organized outreach activities and events to observe the Day. For example, the United Nations Information Centre in Antananarivo, together with the South African Embassy, held an official ceremony and arranged a visit to a local school, where students were briefed on Mr. Mandela's legacy; the Information Centre in Ouagadougou planned a press conference with a photographic exhibition highlighting his contribution to human rights and democracy; and the Information Centre in Pretoria worked with the Nelson Mandela Foundation on Mandela Day activities, including a film screening and volunteer activity for United Nations staff.

B. Special Information Programme on the Question of Palestine

7. As part of the Special Information Programme on the Question of Palestine, the Department held its annual International Media Seminar on Peace in the Middle East in Astana on 21 and 22 May, in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan. Some 350 participants, including media practitioners, policymakers and academics from France, Israel, Kazakhstan, the United States of America and the State of Palestine attended. The event included a premiere screening in Kazakhstan of the Oscar-nominated film *Omar*. The seminar was widely covered through national media outlets and social media. On the occasion of the seminar, the Department arranged placement of an op-ed piece by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs in major Kazakh newspapers in English, Kazakh and Russian. The op-ed was also published in other countries, including in Armenia, Bangladesh and Iran (Islamic Republic of).

C. United Nations peace operations

8. Working closely with the Departments of Peacekeeping Operations and Field Support, the Department organized a meeting in New York from 30 June to 2 July of public information specialists and subject matter experts from United Nations Headquarters and peace operations, to update the operational policy entitled "Policy and Guidance for public information in United Nations peacekeeping operations", issued in July 2006.

9. In June, a Department staff member visited the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali to support the public information component of the Mission. A Department staff member also travelled to Entebbe, Uganda, to provide training on digital communications, social media and campaign management to public information staff from the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur and the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

10. The Department collaborated with the Departments of Peacekeeping Operations and Field Support to mark the 2015 International Day of United Nations

Peacekeepers on 29 May. The theme was "UN70 and United Nations peacekeeping: past, present and future". Events were held at Headquarters and by many United Nations information centres, which organized parades and marches, exhibitions, book fairs, seminars, school outreach, special events and the translation into local languages and dissemination of the Secretary-General's message. In troop-contributing countries, uniformed men and women who served in peacekeeping operations and the families of serving and deceased peacekeepers participated in observances, together with representatives from with government ministries. In Bangladesh, the United Nations Information Centre in Dhaka, the Armed Forces Division and the Office of the United Nations Resident Coordinator organized a 5-kilometre "peace run" with hundreds of participants from the Bangladesh Armed Forces Division, United Nations agencies, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the media, and students. In Burkina Faso, the Information Centre in Ouagadougou, in partnership with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Defence, organized an exhibition of photographs, posters, brochures and videos about United Nations peacekeeping. Digital information about United Nations peacekeeping was displayed on electronic video screens in Times Square in New York for several days, where it was viewed by tens of thousands of people, in addition to millions of the Department's social media followers.

11. The Department, in collaboration with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, provided communication and media support to the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations, established by the Secretary-General to review the current state of United Nations peace operations and their emerging needs. In addition, it is collaborating with the Department of Field Support on the transfer of peacekeeping and special political mission websites to a new web platform offering an improved user experience, consistent United Nations branding and greater security.

D. Disarmament

12. In the field of disarmament, the Department worked closely with the Office for Disarmament Affairs, the Permanent Mission of Kazakhstan and the Office of the President of the General Assembly on the observance of the International Day against Nuclear Tests (29 August), including for the General Assembly's informal plenary meeting convened by the President of the General Assembly on 10 September 2015. It worked closely with the Office on the newly established International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons, including by setting up its website in all six official languages.

E. Haiti cholera response

13. The Department supported the communications and outreach activities of the United Nations Senior Coordinator for the Cholera Response in Haiti by arranging extensive media interaction and social media support, and by translating and placing op-eds in numerous countries. These activities helped raise global public awareness about United Nations efforts to eradicate cholera in Haiti and supported fundraising efforts.

F. Ebola

14. The Department continued to support strategic communications planning, media relations and social media support for the United Nations Ebola response and recovery efforts, specifically dedicating human resources to the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General on Ebola and the United Nations Mission for Ebola Emergency Response. The Department coordinated the system-wide alignment of messaging through the United Nations Communications Group and managed the "Global Ebola Response" website. It provided direct communications support to the International Ebola Recovery Conference on 10 July, which led to the pledging of over $5 billion from the international community to support Ebola-affected countries.

G. Crisis communications support in Nepal

15. In Nepal, following the April earthquake, the United Nations Information Centre in Kathmandu hosted a communications team from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, and assisted with organizing press conferences, issuing press releases, monitoring of press coverage, convening meetings of the humanitarian country team and arranging media interviews for senior officials.

H. New Partnership for Africa's Development

16. The Department continued to raise global awareness about, and support for, the New Partnership for Africa's Development through its magazine *Africa Renewal/ Afrique Renouveau* and the "Africa Renewal" website in English and French. In March, the Department participated in the 2015 Regional Coordination Mechanism for Africa, held in Addis Ababa, on the theme "United Nations system support to the African Union's 2015 Year of Women Empowerment and Development towards Africa's Agenda 2063." To mark the year, the theme of the April 2015 edition of the magazine was "Gender equality and women's empowerment".

17. The magazine's August 2015 edition was dedicated to the United Nations Third International Conference on Financing for Development, held in Addis Ababa in July. Published ahead of the conference, in early July, the magazine included articles on the importance of domestic resource mobilization in Africa; financing the region's health infrastructure in the light of the Ebola outbreak in West Africa; and economic development in Ethiopia. The Department also assisted the African Union in editing and designing its newsletter dedicated to the Year of Women's Empowerment and Development towards Africa's Agenda 2063, which was distributed at the African Union summit held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in June.

18. From March through July 2015, the Department placed 30 articles that were published a total of 293 times in English and French in 115 media outlets in more than 17 countries. It increased its presence online to reach a small but growing African population with access to the Internet, as well as audiences in developed countries, using several social media tools. As of July 2015, the *Africa Renewal/ Afrique Renouveau* Twitter account had more than 115,000 followers.

I. Action/2015

19. The Department continues to lead the "2015: Time for Global Action" campaign to raise awareness of sustainable development issues. It works closely with relevant offices to promote important events, including the Third International Conference on Financing for Development; the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda; and the United Nations Climate Change Conference, to be held in Paris from 30 November to 11 December. The Department launched a web platform at www.un.org/action2015 in all six official languages to promote the campaign.

20. As Chair of the inter-agency task force of the United Nations Communications Group on the Millennium Development Goals and the post-2015 development agenda, the Department convenes United Nations system partners to agree on a common communications strategy and messages, and to plan joint promotional activities and products on the key issues.

21. The network of 63 United Nations information centres is also promoting and amplifying the new sustainable development agenda, including by engaging Governments, academia, civil society and the general public through seminars, briefings, Model United Nations conferences, speeches and film screenings. The United Nations Information Centre for the Caribbean Area, in Port of Spain, for example, organized a WebEx briefing in June with the visiting Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on Post-2015 Development Planning, which connected her to more than 130 media, civil society and other participants, including United Nations country team representatives in seven countries in the Caribbean.

22. In other regions, the United Nations Information Centre in Ankara organized a Model United Nations conference on the post-2015 development agenda at Gazi University in March that attracted 350 students from 25 countries, and the Information Centre in Nairobi held a Model United Nations conference with 500 delegates from eight universities. UNIC Dhaka, in partnership with the United Nations Youth and Students Association of Bangladesh, organized a round-table seminar in June on the Millennium Development Goals and the post-2015 development agenda.

J. Reports

23. The *2015 Millennium Development Goals Report* was launched by the Secretary-General in Oslo on 6 July by way of video link at the opening of the high-level political forum on sustainable development, held in New York. It was complemented by a press conference at Headquarters and by regional and national launches organized by United Nations information centres. The Department issued press materials in all six official languages, coordinated media outreach and prepared a social media strategy to promote the report, which received extensive coverage.

K. Third International Conference on Financing for Development, Addis Ababa

24. Working with the United Nations Communications Group and the Financing for Development Office of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the

Department led outreach efforts to build momentum for the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, held from 13 to 16 July. As part of the "2015: Time for Global Action" campaign, multilingual videos, website content, social media and press materials were developed to engage the media, decision makers, the general public and other key stakeholders, to position the conference as an essential step towards a successful outcome at the United Nations summit on the post-2015 development agenda, to be held in New York in September, and an ambitious agreement on climate at the United Nations Climate Change Conference to be held in Paris in December.

L. Climate change

25. The Department played a key role in communications planning, message development and media and constituency outreach for the President of the General Assembly's high-level event on climate change on 29 June, to build support for a robust agreement at the United Nations Climate Change Conference, to be held in Paris in December 2015. The Department continued to coordinate with the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and other United Nations entities, and with civil society, on planning for the conference in Paris; worked to ensure that climate was part of the messaging for the Third International Conference on Financing for Development; and continued to promote climate action and the role of the United Nations and the Secretary-General through social media and the climate change website.

M. Summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda

26. The Department led communication efforts before and during the summit and worked closely with United Nations system, civil society and other external partners to amplify and coordinate messaging, social media products and media outreach on the post-2015 development agenda, including the sustainable development goals. The "2015: Time for Global Action" website is the main platform for the summit, and the Department produced various multimedia materials, including videos, images and graphics, to promote the summit and the issues before it.

N. United Nations seventieth Anniversary celebration

27. As part of the overall programme of activities undertaken by the Department, United Nations information centres played a key role in the "Turn the World UN Blue" initiative, a global effort in which the world's most iconic monuments, buildings and other landmarks will be lit up in blue on the evening of United Nations Day, 24 October 2015. The initiative, accompanied by press and social media outreach, is an opportunity to highlight the relationship between the United Nations and its Member States, and to promote the message of peace, development and human rights.

28. United Nations information centres also organized special events throughout the year, including some linked to international observances, aimed at promoting the work of the Organization in partnership with Governments, academia and civil society.

O. Social media

29. In addition to the Department's extensive presence on social media platforms managed from New York, United Nations information centres continue to use digital communication tools, including social media platforms and mobile telephones, to quickly and effectively reach a wider and younger audience. As of June, the network had 49 Facebook, 42 Twitter and 28 YouTube accounts to promote key United Nations priorities, including high-level United Nations meetings, global campaigns, international days and observances. The Department recently launched new accounts on SnapChat and Periscope, platforms especially popular for live events and among young people.

III. News services

A. Social media

30. The use of social media across languages and platforms to amplify United Nations messages continues to evolve in order to reach new audiences. The Department saw a large increase in the cumulative total of likes, views, impressions and followers for social media accounts that relate to news and media platforms across all six official languages, which rose from 40 million in May 2014 to more than 350 million in May 2015.

31. Further efforts were made to reach diverse audiences by tailoring engagements to regions. For example, the Arabic Radio Unit concluded a pro bono agreement with the audio platform SoundCloud, which allows for audio files and podcasting to be shared instantaneously and for immediate feedback on audience use. SoundCloud attracts 175 million unique listeners annually; Arabic Radio has established a strong presence on the platform, providing exposure to key figures for their listeners, including the Envoy of the Secretary-General on Youth and the Goodwill Ambassador for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, Mohamed Assaf.

32. In April, the Deputy Secretary-General and the Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs of China launched the Chinese-language homepage of the United Nations website in Beijing. The launch, shown on Weibo, reached over 8.2 million followers. Outreach to Chinese audiences has grown, with content being created for three popular Chinese social video-sharing applications (Weishi, Miaopai and Meipai) with United Nations-related videos being viewed 350 million times. The United Nations Weibo account is expected to reach 7.5 million followers by September, with two live interviews being held that month with senior United Nations officials as part of the outreach on the post-2015 development agenda.

33. During the reporting period, United Nations Arabic Facebook followers saw a 4 per cent monthly increase and will reach over 300,000 by September; the Twitter account was also followed and retweeted by United Nations system partners. The French Facebook account is projected to reach the 200,000 milestone in September 2015, and the French YouTube channel has over 540,000 views. On Twitter, efforts are being made to work closely with the International Organization of *la Francophonie* and United Nations system partners which have a strong presence in the French-speaking world.

34. Followers of the Russian Facebook account have grown significantly, making it an important platform for sharing information on issues of importance to the region. During the reporting period, the Spanish Twitter account had 440,000 followers, with a growth rate of 80 per cent; and the Spanish YouTube account is projected to have had more than a million views in September, reflecting a 90 per cent growth rate.

35. The Secretary-General's messages are also repurposed for social media use. As part of the International Day of Happiness, a short video, *Ban Ki-moon joins the #HappySoundsLike campaign* has garnered over 17,000 downloads. The first-ever International Day of Yoga saw a large engagement with the United Nations by way of YouTube and the use of new applications for mobile devices, such as Periscope, which connected viewers worldwide to United Nations Headquarters and other events.

36. The audience of the United Nations YouTube channel has increased significantly, with the number of views across all languages exceeding 17 million and the number of subscribers growing to over 75,000.

B. Television and the Internet

37. The Department continues to work with traditional products and platforms while optimizing its online presence. A new-look www.un.org homepage in all six official languages was launched in March, providing global audiences with a more intuitive, visual and dynamic experience. The redesign allows the Department to update the United Nations home page in all six official languages with daily news highlights, profile the work of United Nations entities and spotlight the efforts of United Nations celebrity advocates and others, keeping content fresh and drawing in younger users.

38. For the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations, a dedicated website with interactive and multimedia elements provides a window on the multifaceted work of the United Nations and captures the Organization's history. The website continues to be enhanced with new information about seventieth anniversary events and fresh multimedia content. Different parts of the United Nations system are creating and adapting content for the website to illustrate the breadth of United Nations achievements from peace to development and human rights. Activities for the seventieth anniversary of the signing of the Charter of the United Nations at an event held in San Francisco on 26 June 2015 were featured in all six official languages on the website.

39. In May, a newly designed website for the International Decade for People of African Descent was launched, as was a website to support the recently established International Day of Yoga. A new multilingual website for the Economic and Social Council, which is fully accessible, provides a comprehensive look at the spectrum of economic and social issues. The Department also created new websites for the Department of Political Affairs and for the Counter-Terrorism Committee.

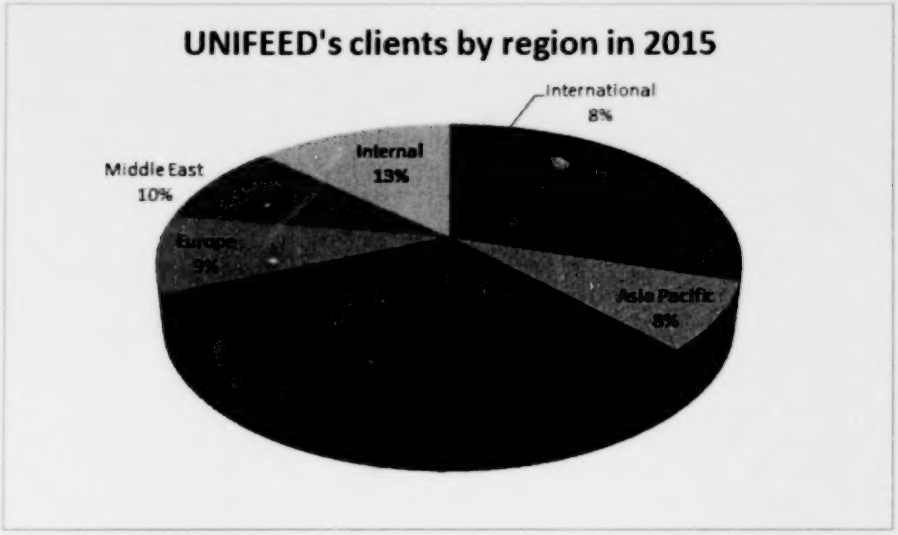
40. The monthly flagship programme, *21st Century*, concluded an agreement with Turkish Radio and Television to produce the programme in Arabic. A special seventieth-anniversary version of the show has been produced, showcasing key issues being addressed by the Organization in 2015. *UN in Action* is building a series around the proposed sustainable development goals and climate change.

41. The Department is also producing more video content for the web, including a weekly short video, *The Week Ahead*, with headlines for upcoming news events in the United Nations system in English, French, Russian and Portuguese and with plans to expand to other languages. This is complemented by a three-minute video, *The Week in Review*, in which some of the key developments of the past week are examined in Chinese, English, French, Kiswahili, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish.

42. The Department continued to improve and expand the Organization's webcast services, including streaming on mobile devices. During the reporting period, some 6,000 new videos were made available, bringing the total to 30,000 on-demand videos on United Nations Web TV.

43. UNifeed, the flagship daily television newswire service, continues to distribute broadcast-quality stories to hundreds of television networks globally through Associated Press Television News, Eurovision and Reuters TV. Between March and September 2015, 1,000 to 1,100 stories will have been made available on the UNifeed website, reaching approximately 200 broadcast users per month.

Figure I



44. In the first four months of the reporting period, the most widely sought stories were related to the earthquakes in Nepal and aid being provided by United Nations agencies; the humanitarian crisis in Yarmouk for Palestinian refugees; the International Day of Happiness; and United Nations efforts in Liberia related to Ebola. A wide range of issues were covered during the reporting period, including the humanitarian crisis in Yemen; the report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on global trends; activities of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva; the flow of migrants in the Mediterranean; and the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations.

C. Radio and online news

45. United Nations Radio and the various language news centres compile and create content daily from across the United Nations system, providing a holistic picture of the United Nations at work, using innovative digital tools. Coverage incorporates infographics, special reports, features, photo essays and interviews into one experience in the six official languages.

46. An audio application, developed on a pro bono basis, was launched earlier in 2015 to provide almost daily audio bulletins on the efforts of all United Nations partners working to tackle Ebola. While primarily providing audio feeds in eight languages, it also featured website and video links, including to the "Global Ebola Response" website.

47. United Nations Radio continued to broaden its partnerships to reach more diverse audiences, partnering, for example, with Roya TV in Jordan and with the Arab States Broadcasting Union to use United Nations radio programmes on their online news sites.

48. For the French unit at United Nations Radio, a special focus has been placed on the fight against extremism and intolerance and on migration issues. The Unit also carried out activities in collaboration with the International Organization of *la Francophonie*, covering, for example, the election of its Secretary-General and the observance of the International Day of *la Francophonie* on 20 March 2015 through an interview with the Permanent Representative of the organization in New York.

49. The French Radio Unit completed a survey in August as part of its efforts to review its relationships with its partners. Special efforts were made to draw on the work of Radio Mikado, at the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali, and Radio Guira, at the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic, and to seek news partners in French-speaking Africa in particular.

50. The Russian Radio Unit secured a new partnership with Radio Vesti in Ukraine in early 2015. Prior to his visit to Central Asia in May, an interview with the Secretary-General was carried online and excerpts were used widely by news agencies in the region.

51. The Kiswahili Radio Unit includes video material as a feature of its news coverage, incorporating subtitled videos with feature stories. The Unit also uses the *This Week at the UN* video, with an anchorperson opening and closing the piece.

52. The news centres for the six official languages continued to provide coverage of breaking and regular news developments in the United Nations system, while highlighting aspects of the Organization's work through feature products such as multimedia feature stories, profiles and news video productions. For example, in April, an Arabic radio producer accompanied the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict on her first visit to the Middle East to produce a series of multimedia stories in Arabic and English. One video, *I'll be Their Voice*, produced in English and Arabic, was screened for Member States when the General Assembly declared 19 June the International Day for the Elimination of Sexual Violence in Conflict.

53. A series of stories were produced on the topic of "Youth and violent extremism and religious tolerance", and a special digital platform was created to promote World Refugee Day (20 June). As part of the Department's coordinated effort to highlight the post-2015 development agenda, a multimedia team was deployed to Addis Ababa to cover the Third International Conference on Financing for Development in July.

54. Other coverage included the visit by British actor Daniel Craig, the United Nations Global Advocate for the Elimination of Mines and Explosive Hazards, and United States actor and film director Robert Redford, who attended the high-level event of the General Assembly on climate change, held on 29 June.

D. Press and photography coverage

55. Between 1 March and 30 September 2015, the Meetings Coverage Section will have produced 2,471 press releases (10,099 pages) in English and French. About 25 per cent (652 press releases) consisted of summaries of the meetings of the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council, and of their subsidiary bodies and substantive commissions. In addition, 1,525 press releases included statements, remarks and messages from the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General, and material from other United Nations offices and departments.

Figure II
Total Meetings Coverage Section Output

	1 March-27 July 2015		*Projected 28 July-30 September 2015*	
	No. of PRs	*No. of Pages*	*No. of PRs*	*No. of Pages*
Meetings coverage	**480**	**4 082**	**172**	**1 695**
General Assembly meetings	128	800	46	645
Security Council meetings	170	1 560	110	859
Economic and Social Council meetings	144	1 364	12	150
Other meetings	38	358	4	41
Press releases	**1 012**	**1 564**	**513**	**820**
General Assembly press releases	20	81	10	24
Security Council press releases	158	210	81	166
Economic and Social Council press releases	0	0	0	0
Secretary-General press releases	699	1 024	329	470
Deputy Secretary-General press releases	38	101	26	67
Other press releases	97	148	67	93
Briefings	**211**	**1 433**	**83**	**505**
Noon briefings	201	1 409	79	496
Press conferences	10	24	4	9
Total	**1 703**	**7 079**	**768**	**3 020**

56. Demand for photography services continued to grow during the reporting period. Between March and September, United Nations Photo will cover over 1,000 events at Headquarters, as well as official travel of the Secretary-General. To manage the increasing demand for photographs, the Department is updating its photograph database and will revamp the photograph website.

57. Social media streams continued to be a popular means for the public to access United Nations Photo, with over 20 million views on Flickr, over 100,000 "likes" on Facebook and more than 69,000 followers on Twitter.

58. More than 500 images were retouched, with captions verified and edited, and published on the United Nations Photo website during the reporting period. The Photo Library handled over 5,000 requests from Member States, the media, publishers and the general public. Over 78,000 high-resolution photographs were distributed to clients through the Library or the photograph website. A special photographic exhibition is being prepared by the Department to celebrate the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations in the Visitors' Lobby in October and November. A book will also be released in conjunction with the exhibition. The photograph archives received many requests from various entities that are creating their own projects related to the seventieth-anniversary celebration.

59. Efforts continue to digitize historic video footage. Through an initiative of the Government of Japan, some 152 videos and film items related to the participation of Japan at the United Nations were digitized. The Government donated one high-resolution copy of the digital files to the United Nations Audiovisual Library for preservation and access for worldwide audiences. By 2028, according to studies by audiovisual archive experts, access to analogue audiovisual media will no longer be possible, owing to factors such as natural decay and lack of playback equipment. The Department therefore continues to pursue partners to fund the digitization and preservation of over 68 years of audiovisual archives on film and in audio, video and photographic formats, which are in danger of being lost forever.

60. Between March and August 2015, the Media Liaison and Accreditation Unit processed over 2,300 media accreditation requests in New York and over 1,200 for the United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Japan and the Third International Conference on Financing for Development in Addis Ababa. The number of requests for media accreditation during the seventieth session of the General Assembly is expected to exceed the 2,000-3,000 received in recent years for the general debate, owing to the high-interest papal visit, the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda and the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations. During the reporting period, the Unit also provided information and logistical assistance for approximately 160 stakeouts and press briefings and facilitated the media coverage of more than 90 bilateral meetings with the Secretary-General and other photo opportunities. The Unit also alerts members of the press and other key partners to United Nations activities at Headquarters and the release of critical documents, through e-mail and its Twitter account, which now has over 30,000 followers.

IV. Outreach and knowledge services

A. Seventieth anniversary of the United Nations

61. The Department undertook a range of activities to mark the seventieth anniversary of the United Nations. United Nations Charter Day, on June 26, was celebrated in a ceremony in San Francisco, where the Charter had been signed 70 years previously, in an event that was attended by the Secretary-General and a number of permanent representatives. At United Nations Headquarters, a Charter Day event addressed by the Deputy Secretary-General, the Vice-President of the General Assembly and the Permanent Representative of the United States to the United Nations connected the United Nations community live to San Francisco.

62. The event featured the launch of new editions of the Charter of the United Nations in all six official languages and a video featuring United Nations Messenger of Peace Michael Douglas, reading excerpts from the Preamble to the Charter. The Department is engaging other Messengers of Peace to record video messages to raise awareness of the seventieth anniversary that will be promoted on social media and featured on the seventieth-anniversary website.

63. The United Nations Bookshop developed a line of seventieth anniversary merchandise, including sustainably sourced stationery.

64. As part of the seventieth-anniversary celebrations, the Department brought the "We the Peoples: Norman Rockwell's United Nations exhibition" to United Nations Headquarters. The exhibition, organized by the Department in partnership with the Norman Rockwell Museum and the United Nations Foundation, showcased original works by iconic United States illustrator Norman Rockwell that capture the spirit of the founding of the Organization, including the *United Nations* drawing and the original *Golden Rule* painting, a reproduction of which has long been displayed at Headquarters.

65. The Department partnered in the production of a book entitled *The United Nations at 70: Restoration and Renewal*. It illustrates the history of the iconic United Nations Headquarters building and the extensive renovation under the capital master plan. The book will be presented to Heads of State by the Secretary-General in September.

B. Education outreach

66. Working in close collaboration with Member States of the Caribbean Community and the African Union, the Department's Remember Slavery programme marked the annual observance of the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade under the theme "Women and slavery":

(a) In cooperation with the Office of the President of the General Assembly and the Permanent Memorial Committee, the Permanent Memorial to Honour the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade, *The Ark of Return*, was unveiled on the Visitors Plaza on 25 March, featuring a performance by the Djoniba Dance and Drum Centre;

(b) Videos, radio programmes and feature stories on the Permanent Memorial were created in the six official languages and in Kiswahili and Portuguese;

(c) A commemorative meeting of the General Assembly featured a keynote address by Sylviane Diouf, a historian and director of the Lapidus Centre for the Historical Analysis of Transatlantic Slavery at the Schomburg Centre for Research in Black Culture of the New York Public Library;

(d) Nineteen Member States contributed in kind to an event that illustrated the impact of the Middle Passage on culinary traditions in the countries that participated in the transatlantic slave trade;

(e) A briefing for non-governmental organizations entitled "Women and slavery: its impact on women's rights today" was webcast live;

(f) A global student videoconference connected 500 high school students at United Nations Headquarters to students in Brazil, Trinidad and Tobago and the United States;

(g) The film *They Are We* was subtitled in English, French, Portuguese and Spanish and made available to United Nations information centres with a student study guide;

(h) An exhibition entitled "Women and slavery: telling their stories" was created in partnership with the Memorial to the Abolition of Slavery in Nantes, France, and displayed in the visitors lobby at United Nations Headquarters. It was produced in English, French, Portuguese and Spanish for display by United Nations information centres;

(i) With guidance from the Remember Slavery programme, 25 United Nations information centres organized commemorative events for the observance of the International Day;

(j) A website in the six official languages, which includes the list of events that were webcast live, as well as a strong social media presence on dedicated Facebook, Twitter and Flickr accounts, complemented the outreach activities.

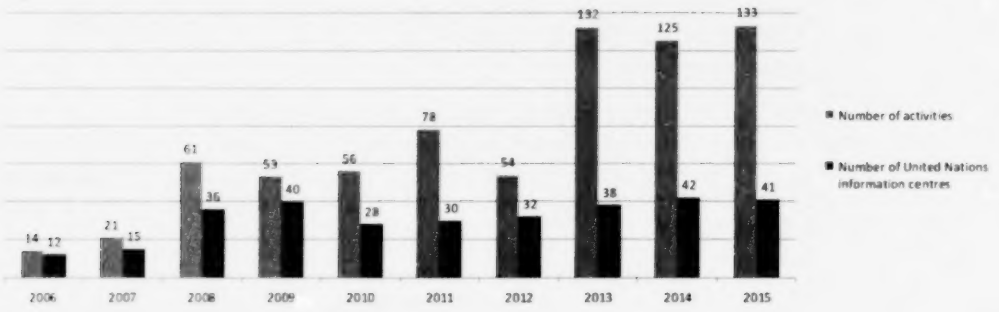
67. The Remember Slavery programme, the United States Mission to the United Nations and Paramount Pictures screened the film *Selma*, which was followed by a discussion with the film's director and students on 23 April 2015.

68. The Remember Slavery programme partnered with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to organize a round-table discussion entitled "The general history of Africa: learning and teaching about African heritage" on 10 July 2015. Highlighted at the event were learning tools that have been developed for three age groups, including units on the transatlantic slave trade; and the newest volume of the *General History of Africa*.

69. The Department's Holocaust and the United Nations Outreach Programme, in partnership with the Permanent Mission of Italy to the United Nations and B'nai B'rith International, organized an event on 28 April entitled "Toscanini: a conductor stands up for justice". Through a multimedia presentation, the historical background of the persecution of the Jews in Italy was provided and Toscanini's opposition to Fascism and Nazism highlighted.

70. Educational outreach on the Holocaust continued with the publication of an article in the Programme's Discussion Papers series on "Music and the Holocaust" by Shirli Gilbert, a senior lecturer at the University of Southampton, , and briefings provided to students, educators, the Association of Holocaust Organizations and the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance. United Nations information centres continued to organize educational briefings, screenings of the Holocaust Programme's tenth-anniversary film and display the programme's exhibit on the seventieth anniversary of the liberation of the Auschwitz Birkenau German Nazi Concentration and Extermination Camp (1940-1945). In 2015, 133 Holocaust education and remembrance activities have been organized in 41 countries.

Figure III
Number of Holocaust education and remembrance activities per year by United Nations information centres



C. Youth and educational outreach

71. Ahead of the International Day of Peace (21 September), the Secretary-General provided a 100-day countdown message on 13 June. The theme for 2015, "Partnerships for peace: dignity for all", highlighted the contribution of non-governmental organizations and civil society in supporting peace efforts around the world and the vital role that they will play in achieving the sustainable development goals. The website and print materials were made available in all six official languages, and a social media presence on Facebook and Twitter complemented the event.

72. Support for Model United Nations programmes continued, with workshops for university students and student leaders. In June and July, the Department conducted a series of virtual training sessions for United Nations information centres around the world, followed by workshops held in India in August.

D. United Nations Academic Impact initiative

73. The United Nations Academic Impact initiative, in association with ELS Educational Services, successfully concluded a global essay writing contest for college and university students on the post-2015 development agenda, to be entered in one of the six official languages of the United Nations that is not the student's mother tongue or principal medium of instruction. Seventy winners, 10 in each

language plus another 10 chosen on merit, participated in a multilingual Global Youth Forum on the principles of the initiative in the General Assembly Hall on 24 July, marking the seventieth anniversary of the Organization. More than 3,500 students from 128 countries participated in the contest.

74. During the reporting period, the initiative also co-sponsored a contest with the United Colours of Benetton Un*Hate* Foundation, in which young people aged 18 to 30 were invited to submit proposals for ending hate, discrimination and intolerance in their communities. More than 100 entries were received from 36 countries, and the submitters of the 10 winning proposals each received €20,000 to implement their projects. The winning entries addressed a range of issues, including racism, sexism, xenophobia, homophobia, religious intolerance and inter-ethnic conflict.

75. On 8 July, the initiative and Amrita University in India co-sponsored the first in a series of discussions entitled "START: skills and technology accelerating rapid transformation", in which experts from around the world came together to discuss how their research could help advance the development agenda. The day-long conference included presentations from researchers at Amrita University, Cambridge University, École polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne, Monash University, the National University of Singapore, the University of Oxford, Stanford University and the University of Twente.

E. Engagement with youth

76. During the reporting period, the Office of the Envoy of the Secretary-General on Youth convened and participated in numerous high-level events in which the Envoy promoted the participation of youth-led, youth-serving organizations and other youth stakeholders in the United Nations system and beyond.

77. The Office of the Envoy on Youth, in partnership with the Office of the President of the General Assembly, held a high-level event of the General Assembly to mark the twentieth anniversary of the World Programme of Action for Youth on 29 May 2015.

78. The Office of the Envoy on Youth organized a side event of the high-level event on 28 May 2015 entitled "The new media and emerging trends in youth engagement". Discussion between media professionals was promoted and the changing role played by the media in shaping the global youth agenda in the digital age explored. The Office also worked with partners to raise awareness of the importance of investing in youth skills development by supporting events marking the first-ever World Youth Skills Day on 15 July 2015. It convened an official side event to mark the Day at the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, in Addis Ababa in July, and other events were held at United Nations Headquarters and around the world.

79. The month of August was promoted as youth advocacy month in order to raise awareness of, and stimulate support for, youth issues in the sustainable development goals. Events and activities were held to commemorate International Youth Day on 12 August and to promote youth engagement at the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda and the high-level segment of the General Assembly in September 2015.

F. Sales and Marketing

80. During the reporting period, the Department published a total of 220 titles. The Department has actively sought to promote multilingualism and enhanced its efforts to acquire publications in all six official languages. Publications included 6 in Arabic, 5 in Chinese, 26 in French, 10 in Russian, 24 in Spanish, 51 bilingual and 1 multilingual.

81. The Department also created and published an interactive iBook version of *Action for Disarmament* in partnership with Apple Inc., to allow for wider access to the publication.

82. The Department promotes United Nations publications on Twitter (138,000 followers) and Facebook (26,000 likes).

G. Publications and Editorial

83. The online multilingual "Yearbook Express" was expanded to include the 2010 as well as the 2006 editions of this collection of the chapter introductions to the corresponding *Yearbooks* in all six official languages.

84. A Chinese edition of *Basic Facts about the United Nations* was prepared in collaboration with Shanghai International Studies University, while a Russian edition of the work was facilitated by the United Nations Information Centre Moscow. The Urdu edition was prepared by the Information Centre in Islamabad.

85. The United Nations Calendar of Observances smartphone application continued to be updated to take account of new observances and to include other new content.

86. Volume LI, No. 4, 2014 of *UN Chronicle*, "Après 2015", was published in French in April 2015. Selected articles from Volume LI, No. 4, 2014, were translated into Russian for online publication in May 2015.

87. Volume LII, Nos. 1 and 2, 2015 of *UN Chronicle*, "UN70" will be published in English in September 2015, with translations into French, Chinese, Japanese and Russian under way.

H. Dag Hammarskjöld Library

88. Services to the Library's stakeholders and clients gained momentum. The online knowledge base, "ASK Dag!" grew exponentially, and the number of questions viewed now exceeds 20,000 a month.

89. During the reporting period, some 3,200 information research requests from permanent missions were answered and some 100 training sessions organized.

90. Activities to make information accessible to multilingual audiences continue. Since March 2015, the Library has published five new guides, including on the Commission on the Status of Women and the Charter of the United Nations, in English; the drafting process of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in French; and the United Nations regular budget and international law, in Spanish.

91. Some 3,332 United Nations documents (representing 175,091 pages) were digitized during the reporting period, and 1,223 of these were uploaded to the Official Documents System, making them available to researchers and other users.

92. General Assembly documents continue to be added to the Digital Repository (repository.un.org), with 1,084 new items added and available in all six official languages. The repository user interface is in English, French and Spanish.

93. During the reporting period, some 2,170 metadata records were created and assigned to documents and publications to improve ease of search and retrieval. Retrospective digitization of all volumes of the *Index to Proceedings* of the major organs was completed.

I. Non-governmental organizations: relations and advocacy

94. There are currently more than 1,400 non-governmental organizations associated with the Department, representing all regions and advocating on United Nations themes, ranging from human rights, education, gender equality and sustainable development to peace.

95. In May, the Department organized a one-day orientation programme aimed at introducing the work of the United Nations to newly associated non-governmental organizations. In July, 20 new non-governmental organizations were associated with the Department, which is working with its United Nations information centres to build more active engagement with non-governmental organizations around the world.

96. The Department continues to expand its outreach to filmmakers and other content creators. Through its Envision partnership with the New York-based Independent Filmmaker Project, the Department organized a screening in March of the award-winning documentary *Dreamcatcher*, chronicling the work of a former prostitute who escaped life on the street to become a positive force for change.

97. In June, the Department partnered with the Los Angeles Film Festival for a panel discussion on the theme "UN(earthing) stories: behind the scenes on the world stage", at which filmmakers shared their experiences of collaborating with the United Nations.

98. The Department is increasingly tapping into the large social media reach of the United Nations Messengers of Peace and other celebrity advocates. For the International Day of Happiness on 20 March, for example, the Department partnered with the online music streaming service MixRadio to develop the "#HappySoundsLike" campaign. Celebrities and the public were asked to nominate a song that made them happy. The campaign achieved 833 million social media impressions as well as 11.7 billion traditional media impressions. The campaign website, in eight languages, was accessed from 182 countries, and "the world's happiest playlist" had 1.8 million listens.

99. The Department actively promoted World Autism Awareness Day on 2 April and the call to action by the Secretary-General inviting business to make firm commitments to employ persons with autism. At an event held at United Nations Headquarters, the Secretary-General was joined by global business leaders to highlight private sector initiatives to access the untapped talent pool of persons on

the autism spectrum, whose unique skills can be of great value in today's "innovation economy".

100. The Department provided support to Member States and partners in organizing a range of special events to promote the goals of the Organization. These included the Peace Bell re-inauguration ceremony by the Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations, on 6 May; the concert, also on 6 May, by the Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations to commemorate the end of the Second World War; the screening of *Plot for Peace* by the Permanent Mission of the Republic of the Congo to the United Nations, on 26 May; the First International Day of Yoga, on 21 June, sponsored by the Permanent Mission of India to the United Nations; the Rhythms of One World Choral Festival, by the Permanent Mission of Romania to the United Nations, on 26 June; the exhibit and concert by the President of the General Assembly on the theme "2015: time for global action", on 30 June; and the Global Citizen Festival in Central Park, on 26 September.

J. Visitors Service

101. The 2015 Reham Al-Farra Memorial Journalists Fellowship Programme was open to journalists and broadcasters from 35 countries. From 10 September to 7 October 15, young journalists representing media organizations from Albania, Bangladesh, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Botswana, China, Egypt, India, Jordan, Nepal, Peru, the Republic of the Congo, South Africa, South Sudan, Timor-Leste and Turkey will participate in this year's programme.

102. Guided Tours has returned and resumed full operation in the General Assembly building. The redesigned tour route includes a disarmament exhibit that went on display in May 2015. Tours continue to be conducted in the six official languages, as well as in Dutch, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Portuguese and, starting in August, Hebrew. Some 115,000 visitors took tours during the reporting period.

103. The Speakers Bureau arranges for groups to be briefed by United Nations officials on a wide range of United Nations-related topics. During the reporting period, in-house briefing programmes reached an audience of more than 26,500. Students represented the majority of groups participating in briefing programmes. Groups were briefed in all of the official languages, as well as in German, Italian, Japanese and Korean.

104. Another outreach activity of the Visitors' Services Clusters, United Nations Works for You (UN4U), enabled United Nations officials to travel to high schools to educate young people about the Organization's work. In total, 1,500 participants received a briefing outside Headquarters by United Nations officials during the reporting period.

K. iSeek, the United Nations intranet and deleGATE

105. The iSeek team posted more than 350 stories, and 559 local and 200 global announcements in English and French on the United Nations intranet, iSeek and the deleGATE sites.

106. The first major "user needs" study conducted in 10 years on the use of the United Nations intranet, iSeek, reached staff in all duty stations. Over 3,000 staff

members contributed to the study; the inputs form the basis for ongoing efforts towards a major redesign of the site, to be launched around September 2015.

L. Graphic Design Unit

107. The Graphic Design Unit continued to provide the Organization-wide print and electronic products for campaigns, conferences and publications, offering a complete creative graphic design service. The Unit also offers production and pre-press services, including project production analysis and cost estimates.

108. During the reporting period, the Unit completed some 200 products for campaigns and conferences, including brand identities, logos, brochures, books, posters, signage, banners and press kits. The Unit created most of its designs in all six official languages and provided materials for the "2015: Time for Global Action" campaign, the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, the eight regional consultations for the World Humanitarian Summit, a global identity for the United Nations Mine Action Service, the President of the General Assembly's exhibition and concert for sustainable development, and the high-level event on climate change.

V. Deepening a culture of evaluation

109. The Evaluation and Communications Research Unit conducts evaluations for the Department and provides technical support to programme managers in conducting their self-assessments. For selected evaluation projects, the global network of United Nations information centres contributes to measuring the effectiveness of communications activities worldwide in multiple languages. The Evaluation and Communications Research Unit also provides department-wide alignment of metrics for monitoring and reporting purposes, which includes social media and website performance. The Unit continues to support the Department's Social Media taskforce with its monitoring and analysis efforts, as well as through research to identify the most appropriate performance and risk management tools.

110. At the request of the Global Ebola Response Information Centre communications team, the Unit has produced weekly reports on news and social media monitoring, and analysis for the purpose of providing timely feedback and improving ongoing communications efforts. The weekly reports have included summary analysis of global news media coverage of the United Nations, media pick-up of key spokespeople, and trends in coverage. In addition, the performance of the campaign hashtag #ebolaresponse has been monitored for volume and top tweets, indicating how effectively United Nations messages on Ebola have reached audiences on Twitter.

111. The Evaluation and Communications Research Unit is also preparing for an evaluation of the Department's communications efforts towards the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda in September. The evaluation will include global news media monitoring and analysis, as well as analyses of social media, websites, and broadcast products. Results are expected in the fourth quarter of 2015. As part of this effort, the Unit is currently monitoring and conducting analysis of news media coverage and social media performance of the campaign hashtag #action2015. The Unit produces weekly reports for the

Strategic Communications Division, with the purpose of incorporating timely feedback into the ongoing communications efforts leading up to the summit.

VI. Conclusions

112. As the United Nations commemorates its seventieth anniversary, the Department of Public Information will continue to build on its history of informing and engaging people in languages that they understand with content that is informative, interesting and accessible. The Department will take advantage of fast-moving technological and other developments in global communications to deliver on its core mission of informing the world about the breadth and depth of the work of the United Nations around the world.

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Item 119 of the provisional agenda*
Follow-up to the commemoration of the two-hundredth anniversary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade

Programme of educational outreach on the transatlantic slave trade and slavery

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted in accordance with General Assembly resolution 69/19, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report on continued action to implement the programme of educational outreach on the transatlantic slave trade and slavery and the steps taken to enhance public awareness of the commemorative activities and the permanent memorial to honour the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade.

The Department of Public Information selected the theme "Women and slavery" for 2015 to pay tribute to enslaved women who succeeded in transmitting their African culture to their descendants, notwithstanding the many abuses that they had to bear, and those who made efforts to combat slavery.

The Department, in the context of its "Remember slavery" programme, organized a series of activities throughout the year, including the annual observance of the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade on 25 March with the unveiling of the permanent memorial, *Ark of Return*, educational briefings in cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and other partners, film screenings, discussions, cultural events and an exhibition. The Department also mobilized its network of United Nations information centres, used social media platforms and strengthened partnerships with Member States and civil society actors to raise awareness of the programme, the International Day and the permanent memorial.

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I. Introduction

1. On 17 December 2007, the General Assembly, in its resolution 62/122, designated 25 March the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

2. In the same resolution, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to collaborate with and build on the work of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), including its Slave Route Project, to establish a programme of educational outreach to instil in future generations an understanding of the causes, consequences and lessons of the slave trade and to communicate the dangers of racism and prejudice.

3. In its follow-up resolutions, including resolution 69/19, the General Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to report on continued action to implement the outreach programme and the steps taken to enhance world public awareness of commemorative activities and the permanent memorial to honour the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade.

4. The present report is submitted pursuant to those requests.

II. Background

5. Taking place over a 400-year period, the transatlantic slave trade was the largest forced migration in history. The extensive exodus of Africans to many areas of the world was unprecedented in human history. The legacy of that migration remains evident today in the large populations of people of African descent living throughout the Americas. In the past few years, efforts have been made to raise public awareness regarding the slave trade and its lasting consequences on societies throughout the world. As part of those efforts, it is essential to recognize the contributions that enslaved people and their descendants have made to the societies that forced them into bondage. The International Decade for People of African Descent (2015-2024) also affords an opportunity to showcase those contributions and recognize that people of African descent represent a distinct group whose human rights must be promoted and protected.

III. "Remember slavery" programme

6. Through its programme of activities, the "Remember slavery" programme, managed by the Department of Public Information, is aimed at honouring the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade and raising awareness of the dangers of racism and prejudice. Working closely with the States members of the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) and the African Union, the programme organized a series of events throughout the year. In addition to the annual observance of the International Day during the week of 25 March, the worldwide commemorative and educational activities included cultural events, student briefings, panel discussions, exhibitions, film screenings and media relations.

7. The Department also partnered with UNESCO to observe the twentieth anniversary of the Slave Route Project in September 2014 and worked closely with

UNESCO throughout the process that led to the unveiling of the permanent memorial.

8. In 2015, the "Remember slavery" programme selected "Women and slavery" as the theme in order to pay tribute to the many enslaved women who endured unbearable hardships, as well as those who fought for freedom from slavery and advocated for its abolition. The theme also celebrates the strength of enslaved women who succeeded in transmitting their African culture to their descendants.

IV. Permanent memorial

Unveiling of *Ark of Return*

9. In preparation for the inauguration of *Ark of Return*, the Department of Public Information organized a series of activities in 2014 to garner support from Member States and civil society and raise the profile of the process led by the Permanent Memorial Committee:

(a) It showcased the architectural design of *Ark of Return* in an exhibition that was on display in the Visitor Centre at Headquarters from 10 July to 28 September 2014;

(b) The "Remember slavery" programme held a high-level ceremony on 28 September in the exhibition area to acknowledge financial contributions of Member States to the construction of the permanent memorial. Representatives of the Netherlands, New Zealand and Qatar, as well as ministers from Senegal and Spain, participated in the event. Ministers from Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Grenada and Jamaica also attended the event, as did the Secretary-General of CARICOM and the Director General of UNESCO. A similar event was organized on 22 September with the Boris and Inara Teterev Foundation and the Permanent Representative of Latvia to the United Nations;

(c) On 10 December, the Department facilitated, in partnership with the Office of the President of the General Assembly and the Permanent Memorial Committee, the organization of a high-level luncheon to raise awareness of the Memorial. The "Remember slavery" programme produced a series of banners to present the design of *Ark of Return* and explain its purpose.

10. In cooperation with the Office of the President of the General Assembly and the Permanent Memorial Committee, the Department organized the unveiling of *Ark of Return* in the Visitors Plaza at Headquarters on 25 March. Speakers included the President of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General, the Prime Minister of Jamaica, the Director General of UNESCO, the Permanent Observer of the African Union to the United Nations, the Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations speaking on behalf of the contributors and Rodney Leon, the architect and designer of the permanent memorial. The event concluded with a performance of African music and a procession accompanied by live drums leading to the General Assembly Hall for the solemn commemorative meeting.

Raising awareness

11. Through the permanent memorial, the "Remember slavery" programme conveys to visitors the lessons and legacy of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade.

12. The Department promoted media coverage of the unveiling of the permanent memorial through its social media accounts and multimedia services. These included Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, United Nations Television and Video, United Nations Radio, United Nations Web TV, UNifeed, *Africa Renewal* and the United Nations News Centre. Photos, B-roll and press releases were made available to international media. A News Centre article that had been posted on the English website on 24 March was rated the top story of the year. On 25 March, the News Centre posted a news story, a photo story and a special feature on the unveiling of the permanent memorial, which received a record 33,489 page views. The "Remember slavery" programme also published articles on iSeek and deleGATE to help to raise awareness of the permanent memorial among United Nations staff members and the diplomatic community.

13. The Department produced videos, radio programmes and feature stories on the permanent memorial in the six official languages, as well as in Kiswahili and Portuguese. In addition, the "Remember slavery" programme provided support to two United Nations Television productions on the permanent memorial: *UN in Action* and *21st Century*, documenting the process and explaining its significance.

14. The "Remember slavery" programme is working in close partnership with the Visitor Centre to increase the number of visitors to the permanent memorial. The Visitor Centre website features *Ark of Return* prominently and offers briefings on slavery and the transatlantic slave trade for school groups. The programme conducted weekly briefings for students and the general public at the permanent memorial throughout the summer, during the height of the tourist season. The permanent memorial is promoted on the social media accounts of the United Nations, the Visitor Centre and the programme. A small replica of the permanent memorial and a poster will be sold in the United Nations Bookshop.

15. The "Remember slavery" programme also developed promotional materials, including a multilingual poster and brochure, to encourage visits to the permanent memorial. Posters and postcards were disseminated to the United Nations information centres and schools. Visits were also promoted through traditional, social and tourism media.

V. Annual commemoration

16. The Department of Public Information worked in close collaboration with the Office of the President of the General Assembly, the United Nations Office for Partnerships and States members of CARICOM and the African Union to organize a series of events during the week of 25 March in observance of the International Day.

Solemn commemorative meeting of the General Assembly

17. Following the unveiling of the permanent memorial, a solemn commemorative meeting of the General Assembly was held on 25 March. Remarks were delivered by the President of the General Assembly, the Secretary-General, representatives of

the regional groups, the host country and individual Member States. All speakers welcomed the unveiling of the permanent memorial.

18. Sylviane Diouf, a historian and director of the Lapidus Center for the Historical Analysis of Transatlantic Slavery at the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture of the New York Public Library, delivered the keynote address on the theme of "Women and slavery". Ms. Diouf emphasized that the theme reminded the international community that no history, no present and no future could be written without recognizing the vital role of women. She added that the contribution of enslaved women was too often ignored, glossed over or even denied. Enslaved women were more likely to be subjected to physical abuse than men and were the victims of sexual abuse, harassment and rape. They fought back through overt manifestations of insubordination such as poisoning, secret abortions and even uprisings. She emphasized that enslaved women were immense contributors to a new world, using their skills, knowledge and work to transform the land by building cities and towns and fighting for their freedom and for the independence of the countries that had enslaved them. She said that their creativity, energy, resourcefulness and fortitude would not be forgotten.

19. Following the solemn meeting, the Djoniba Dance & Drum Centre gave a performance that included music and dance, the origins of which can be traced to the African continent.

Cultural and culinary event

20. The "Remember slavery" programme organized a cultural and culinary event on the evening of 25 March to celebrate the heritage and traditions that enslaved Africans had brought to Europe and the Americas. Chef Pierre Thiam presented a wide range of food to illustrate the impact of the Middle Passage on culinary traditions in the countries that had participated in the transatlantic slave trade.

21. The following 19 Member States contributed in kind to the culinary event, showcasing national dishes and specialties: Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Barbados, Belize, Cameroon, Chile, Colombia, Denmark, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Suriname, Ukraine and Uruguay. The United Nations Staff Recreation Council Society for Promotion of Indian Culture and Experience also contributed to the event.

22. The event included a performance by the Djoniba Dance & Drum Centre, celebrating the journey of the African diaspora.

Global videoconference for students

23. On 27 March, some 600 students and educators participated in the "Remember slavery" programme's global videoconference that linked Headquarters to secondary schools in Brazil, Trinidad and Tobago and the United States of America. The students made presentations and engaged in a live interaction on the "Women and slavery" theme. The event was organized with the support of the UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network. It was available as a live webcast and a study guide was distributed to the students.

24. The conference was moderated by Eola L. Dance, Programme Manager, North-East Region, for the Underground Railroad Network to Freedom of the National Park Service. Margaret Washington, Professor of History at Cornell

University, gave a presentation on women and resistance from a diaspora perspective. A video produced by the Department on *Ark of Return*, featuring Mr. Leon, was also screened at the event.

Briefing for non-governmental organizations and panel discussion

25. On 26 March, the Department organized a briefing for non-governmental organizations on the theme "Women and slavery: its impact on women's rights today" that was available as a webcast. Panellists included Françoise Vergès, an expert on the Memorial to the Abolition of Slavery in Nantes, France, and Consulting Professor at Goldsmiths College, University of London; Ms. Washington; Ms. Dance; and Elizabeth Maurer, Director of Programmes at the National Women's History Museum.

26. The panellists discussed the impact of slavery on women, their role as freedom fighters and how slavery had influenced the movements for women's rights and gender equality. The briefing was moderated by Gaynel Curry, Gender and Women's Rights Adviser, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in New York. Ms. Curry provided useful insights into the latest session of the Commission on the Status of Women, held in March, and the plan of action of the International Decade for People of African Descent.

VI. Other educational activities

27. The Department of Public Information and UNESCO organized a round-table discussion entitled "The general history of Africa: learning and teaching about African heritage" on 10 July at Headquarters. The purpose of the event was to raise awareness of the importance of teaching the history of Africa at all levels within the educational system to combat racial prejudice and stereotypes of people of African descent and to highlight the importance of Africa in the history of humanity. The discussion focused on how the General History of Africa project of UNESCO could be incorporated into national curricula and how it could contribute to the implementation of the action plan for the International Decade for People of African Descent. Moderated by the Department, participants included the Director General of UNESCO, the Permanent Representative of Kenya to the United Nations, the Deputy Permanent Representative of Brazil to the United Nations, a Senior Adviser to the Permanent Observer Mission of the African Union to the United Nations and several experts involved in the project.

28. Recognizing the power of film as an educational tool, the Department continued its multilingual film series related to slavery and its legacy. The "Remember slavery" programme engaged with a number of partners, including Paramount Pictures, Black Entertainment Television and the Departments of Education of the states of New Jersey and New York. Screenings and discussions took place in New York, with the sponsorship of Member States, and in 16 countries around the world through the United Nations information centres. Interviews were conducted with producers and artists who attended the screenings, which were publicized on United Nations media and social media accounts to raise awareness of the issue. The films included:

(a) *Tula, the Revolt*, directed by Jeroen Leinders, which was screened on 9 September 2014 at Fordham University, New York, followed by a discussion with

the actor Danny Glover, Yuko Miki, Assistant Professor of History at Fordham University, and Natasha Lightfoot, Assistant Professor of History at Columbia University. Stephanie James Wilson, Executive Director of the New Jersey Amistad Commission, Department of Education, moderated the discussion;

(b) *They Are We*, by Australian director Emma Christopher, shown at the American Museum of Natural History in New York on 27 December 2014 in observance of Kwanzaa, a celebration of the influences of African heritage on African-American culture;

(c) *Selma*, screened in New York on 7 January for high school educators. The screening was followed by a discussion with the director, Ava DuVernay. The film was also shown at the United Nations for the diplomatic community, staff members and students representing schools from the New Jersey and New York areas on 23 April. A discussion with the director was moderated by National Public Radio journalist Michele Norris. The event was co-sponsored by the United States Mission to the United Nations and organized in partnership with Paramount Pictures and the "Selma4Students" project;

(d) *The Book of Negroes*, screened at Headquarters on 11 February in observance of Black History Month in the United States. The event featured one of the six episodes in the series and included a discussion with the director and executive producer, Clement Virgo, and actors Aunjanue Ellis and Louis Gossett, Jr. The event was co-sponsored by the Permanent Mission of Canada to the United Nations.

29. The Department and UNESCO organized two other events to mark the twentieth anniversary of the Slave Route Project:

(a) The first, which was held on 4 September 2014, was a round-table discussion on the representation of slavery in film, with the participation of film scholars and representatives of the motion picture industry;

(b) The second, held on 5 September 2014, included a panel discussion for educators featuring the UNESCO publication *The Transatlantic Slave Trade and Slavery: New Directions in Teaching and Learning*. The two editors of the publication discussed the psychological consequences of the slave trade and slavery and shared their experiences incorporating the subject into high school curricula.

VII. Educational and promotional materials

Exhibition

30. The "Remember slavery" programme produced the exhibition entitled "Women and slavery: telling their stories", which was on display in the Visitors Lobby at Headquarters from 10 March to 9 April. The exhibition was created in partnership with the Nantes Memorial to the Abolition of Slavery, which published an extensive account of women and slavery in connection with its exhibition entitled "Dix femmes puissantes". The exhibition featured the personal stories of enslaved women and freedom fighters. It was produced in English, French, Portuguese and Spanish and made available to the global network of United Nations information centres. Twelve centres displayed it around the world.

31. Registered as one of the side events planned during the fifty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, the exhibition was opened on 12 March. The Under-Secretary-General for Communications and Public Information, the Permanent Observer of CARICOM to the United Nations and a representative from the African Union delivered remarks. The keynote speaker was Michele Mitchell, Associate Professor of History at New York University.

Film package

32. In 2015, the "Remember slavery" programme partnered with the director of *They Are We* to make it available to the United Nations information centres with a student guide. The English version of the film was subtitled in French and Spanish. Sixteen centres also screened it to students. Other centres also screened the UNESCO documentary *Slave Routes: A Global Vision*.

Website

33. The Department updated the "Remember slavery" website in the six official languages to provide information on the programme's activities, educational resources on the transatlantic slave trade and the permanent memorial. The "Remember slavery" website experienced a 15 per cent increase in visits in 2015, owing mainly to the traffic driven by interest in the new permanent memorial page.

Print

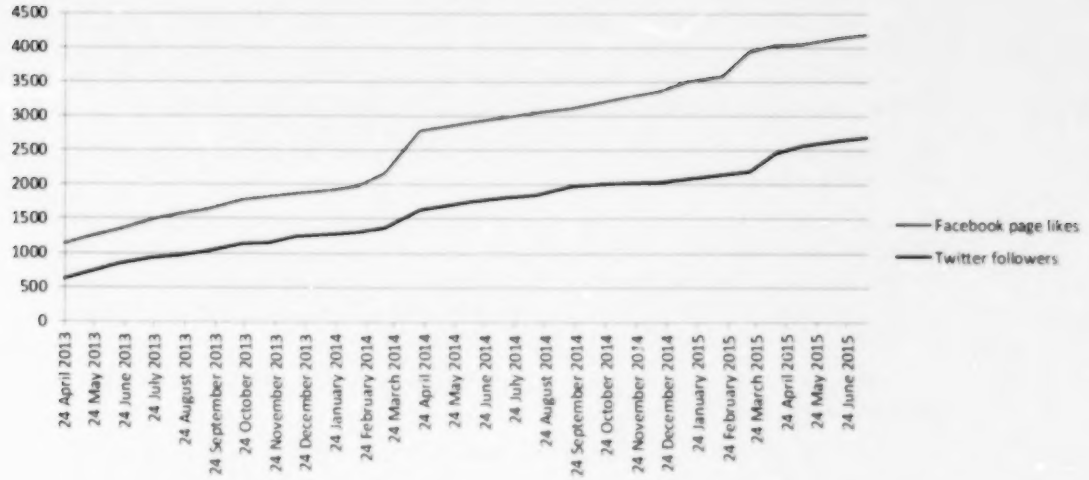
34. The "Remember slavery" programme continues to develop traditional media and multilingual print materials such as flyers, posters, postcards, banners, bookmarks, pins, folders and press kits. Posters and postcards have also been made available in digital format to the United Nations information centres in the six official languages, as well as in Kiswahili and Portuguese.

Multimedia

35. The Department facilitated media coverage of the activities held throughout the year through its multimedia and social media services. "Remember slavery" activities and the unveiling of the permanent memorial were promoted through Facebook, Twitter and the main United Nations social media accounts, including YouTube. It is estimated that more than 5 million Twitter accounts received content from the United Nations on the commemorative events and the permanent memorial.

36. The organization of activities throughout the year has resulted in a significant traffic increase on the social media accounts handled by the "Remember slavery" programme. The number of likes registered on the Facebook account have tripled in two years, while the number of followers on the Twitter account have quadrupled (see figure I).

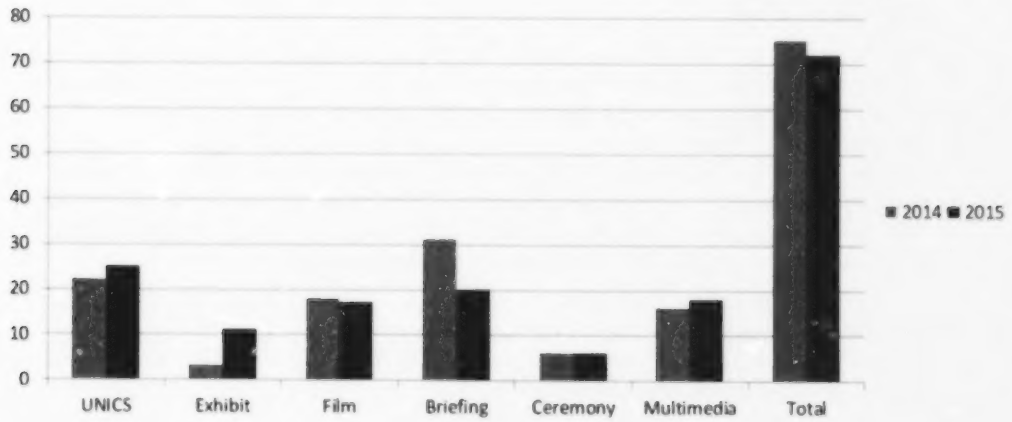
Figure I
"Remember slavery" social media followers



VIII. Activities of the United Nations information centres

37. More United Nations information centres, services and offices around the world participated in the 2015 commemoration than in 2014 (see figure II). In total, 26 field offices organized activities, representing an increase in exhibits and multimedia outreach as a result of the products and support provided to them by the "Remember slavery" programme. More than 70 educational activities were organized by the United Nations information centres in each year, and most of them were held in Africa and Latin America. For the first time, activities were organized in Guinea-Bissau and at the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti.

Figure II
Number of United Nations information centre "Remember slavery" activities per year



38. Through an innovative approach initiated in 2014 by the Nations Information Centres Service, eight centres were paired to organize videoconference exchanges across duty stations between students, following the screening of *They Are We*. That interaction allowed them to compare their understanding of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade with their peers. Offices in the following locations participated: Accra and Port of Spain; Antananarivo and Brazzaville; Dakar and the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti; and Lusaka and Lagos, Nigeria.

39. Other activities undertaken by information centres for the commemoration included the following:

(a) On 25 March, the Centre in Accra organized, in partnership with the Ghana Museums and Monument Board and UNESCO, the screening of *They Are We* for 500 students. The "Women and slavery" exhibition was on display for six days at an international school. The Centre also arranged a live broadcast of the ceremony to unveil the permanent memorial in New York;

(b) On 23 March, the Centre in Ankara displayed an exhibition on slavery at the Yildirim Beyazıt University;

(c) On 25 March, the Centre in Antananarivo organized a ceremony and conference at the André Resampa high school in partnership with the United Nations Club. They also mounted the "Women and slavery" exhibition that was seen by 2,300 visitors. On 31 March, an educational briefing was given at a local university;

(d) On 30 March, the Centre in Bogota opened its doors to 39 students from Gustavo Rojas Pinilla public school who viewed a screening of *They Are We* and participated in a debate on the impact of slavery and its consequences;

(e) On 25 March, the Centre in Brazzaville hosted an educational briefing featuring a drum performance;

(f) On 25 March, the Centre in Bujumbura and Marien Ngouabi University hosted a series of activities. More than 300 students participated in an educational briefing, viewed a screening of *They Are We* and visited the "Women and slavery" exhibition;

(g) On 25 March, the Centre in Canberra organized, in partnership with Anti-Slavery Australia, a screening of *They Are We* at the University of Technology in Sydney with the director and a photographer, Sergio Leyva Seiglie. Photos of the film were on display;

(h) On 25 March, the Centre in Dakar organized several events in partnership with the country team. A round-table discussion on the "Women and slavery" exhibition was broadcast live on the national public radio station. The "Women and Slavery" exhibition was shown at the National Gallery of Art of Senegal, in partnership with UNESCO and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. The Portuguese version of the exhibition was presented in Guinea-Bissau in May, with assistance from the Information Centre and the United Nations Development Programme office in Dakar;

(i) On 25 March, the Centre in Dar es Salaam, United Republic of Tanzania, organized a briefing on slavery and the transatlantic slave trade for 100 young people, followed by a screening and discussion of *They Are We*. The "Women and slavery" exhibition was also on display;

(j) On 31 March, a screening of *They Are We* was organized by the Information Service in Geneva for members of the international community, non-governmental organizations and staff members;

(k) On 1 April, the Centre in Harare screened *They Are We* for students from six high schools. The screening was followed by a discussion;

(l) On 25 March, the Centre in Lagos, Nigeria, organized a walk through the historic town of Badagry, which is part of the UNESCO Slave Trade Route and known as an important port used in the exportation of slaves to the Americas. A number of activities were organized in partnership with the African Renaissance Foundation, which included the "Women and slavery" exhibition, a screening of *They Are We*, a briefing for students, a rally to raise awareness, performances and visits to two museums on slavery;

(m) On 25 March and 7 April, the Centre in Lima screened *They Are We* and mounted the "Women and slavery" exhibition for students as part of an interactive educational briefing on the influence of African people in Peruvian culture and the impact of slavery. The students received a guide to the film and participated in a contest. "Women and slavery" will be shown in public libraries, universities and other appropriate locations throughout the year, including in the context of the International Decade for People of African Descent;

(n) On 25 March, the Centre in Lusaka organized a screening of *They Are We* for students, distributed campaign materials and coordinated a discussion on Twitter, Facebook and through text messages. Two bulk messages reached some 10,000 people throughout the country;

(o) The Centre in Nairobi invited university students to attend a round-table discussion and to visit the "Women and slavery" exhibition, both of which were organized in collaboration with UNESCO. The discussion was chaired by the Director General of the United Nations Office at Nairobi;

(p) From 25 to 28 March, the Centre in Ouagadougou organized a series of lectures in 10 high schools in Burkina Faso under the theme "Remembering victims of slavery and modern forms of slavery: prostitution and girls' sexual exploitation", reaching out to some 2,000 students and teachers. The Centre also organized on its premises an exhibition of brochures, posters, photos, booklets, films and international texts related to slavery and the transatlantic slave trade, which was seen by 6,347 visitors;

(q) The Centre in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, translated the "Women and slavery" exhibition into Portuguese, published a print version of it and shared it with the Information Centre in Dakar so that it could be mounted in Guinea-Bissau. In addition, the director of the Centre in Rio de Janeiro gave an interview to the Portuguese service of United Nations Radio on the International Decade for People of African Descent, which was broadcast on 25 March. It also published story online, as did the Information Centres in Pretoria and Washington, D.C.;

(r) The Centre in Yaounde organized, in partnership with UNESCO, a panel discussion on the "Women and slavery" exhibition following the screening of *Slave Routes: A Global Vision* and *They Are We*. The event was covered by the local media;

(s) On 25 March, the United Nations Office in Yerevan organized the screening of *The Slave Route* for high school students.

IX. Activities of Member States

40. In General Assembly resolution 69/19, Member States were requested to provide information about their national educational programmes designed to educate and inculcate in future generations an understanding of the lessons, history and consequences of slavery and the slave trade. The contribution received by the Secretariat in 2015 is summarized below.

41. Jamaica continued to undertake a number of activities to attract the attention of the public on the issue of slavery and its legacies. One highlight in the annual cultural calendar is the celebration surrounding Emancipation Day, which is marked annually on 1 August. In addition to solemn vigils held around the country, there were also re-enactments of the reading of the Emancipation Proclamation. These activities serve to honour the memory of those who suffered, fought and overcame the oppression of slavery. Events associated with the annual National Heritage Week celebrations in October, culminating with National Heroes Day, are aimed at enhancing the appreciation of Jamaicans of their history, engendering national pride and promoting understanding of the role that slavery and the resistance played in making Jamaica what it is and Jamaicans who they are today. The education curricula in the primary and secondary schools also include in-depth treatment of the issues of the slave trade, slavery and emancipation.

42. Jamaica also played a leading role in the efforts at the international level to bring greater attention to this important subject. The Permanent Representative of Jamaica to the United Nations chaired the committee that oversaw the plans for and the erection of *Ark of Return*. The Prime Minister of Jamaica took part in its unveiling. Jamaica is also an active participant in the planning of the annual series of activities in support of the "Remember slavery" education outreach programme run by the Department of Public Information.

X. Contribution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to the programme of educational outreach on the transatlantic slave trade

43. UNESCO has continued its efforts to enhance awareness of the history and consequences of the transatlantic slave trade and slavery through its Slave Route Project. It has stepped up its involvement in developing routes of memory and memory tourism by finalizing the methodological guide for managers of sites and places of memory, which will be published online in late 2015; creating a "Slave Route Site" marker to encourage countries to set up routes of memory on the subject of slavery; creating an Internet portal to publicize routes of memory throughout the world and virtual collections from museums of slavery; and activating the international network of managers of sites of memory, established in Brasilia in 2012, to enable memorial heritage professionals to exchange information and good practices and to form partnerships.

44. With regard to its contribution to the International Decade for People of African Descent, UNESCO has drawn up an agenda for the Decade providing information on its various themes and on important dates in the history of people of African descent. The agenda will be published in French, English, Portuguese and Spanish and in various countries, in close cooperation with OHCHR.

45. To mark the twentieth anniversary of the Slave Route Project, UNESCO held a special event at its headquarters in Paris on 10 September 2014. The event consisted of four parts: a discussion of the actions and activities to be carried out as part of the International Decade for People of African Descent; an exhibition entitled "Africans in India: from slaves to generals and rulers", prepared by the New York-based Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture; the release of doves around the UNESCO Symbolic Globe; and a commemorative ceremony bringing together political, artistic and intellectual figures to report on and attest to their support for the Project. That event, which attracted more than 1,500 people, afforded an opportunity to highlight the Project's accomplishments and future prospects, as well as its impact in helping to mainstream the issue of slavery on the international agenda. The event received a level of media coverage unprecedented in the history of the Project. A number of other events were held throughout the world, reflecting the results achieved. In addition, for this anniversary, a brochure entitled "The Slave Route: 1994-2014 — The Road Travelled" was published in three languages and distributed to all partners involved.

46. A partnership was established with United Nations information centres to mark the twentieth anniversary of the Slave Route Project by means of various activities (symposiums, exhibits, film screenings, artistic performances, publications and audiovisual programmes) in various countries, including Cameroon, Cabo Verde, Costa Rica, Cuba, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, France, Indonesia, Japan, Kenya, Morocco, Paraguay and the United States.

47. To share its experience, its information materials and its proposals for the implementation of the International Decade for People of African Descent, UNESCO took part in a number of commemorative activities held in various countries to mark international days (the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade and the International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition) or relevant national days.

48. The International Scientific Committee for the Slave Route Project met in Mexico City in November 2014, with generous support from the National Institute of Anthropology and History of Mexico. The participants assessed the commemoration of the twentieth anniversary of the Project and proposed actions and activities for the Decade, partnership-building and mobilization of extrabudgetary resources.

XI. Future activities

49. During the remainder of 2015 and throughout 2016, the Department will continue to collaborate closely with Member States to promote the annual observance of the International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade, the "Remember slavery" programme and the permanent memorial.

50. Building on the positive momentum gained in 2014 and 2015, the Department will continue to organize events throughout the year. Such activities make for better opportunities for outreach and partnerships, for planning events more effectively within existing resources and for creating a sustained and effective educational programme.

51. The Department will also continue to support efforts to raise awareness of the permanent memorial, in cooperation with States members of CARICOM and the African Union.

52. The Department will dedicate special attention to strengthening its multilingual websites and the involvement of academics and institutions of learning in the programme. It will also aim to publish appropriate educational materials on slavery and the transatlantic slave trade for students in order to fulfil its mandate.

53. A number of activities will be held in the coming months, including:

(a) A presentation at the annual conference of the Association for African American Life and History in September;

(b) The world premiere of the new documentary *Queen Nanny: Legendary Maroon Chieftainess* at Headquarters in October, in partnership with the Permanent Mission of Jamaica to the United Nations and with the presence of the director and producer, Roy T. Anderson.